UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

CONCEPTS OF BUDDHISM

CONCEPTS OF BUDDHISM

BY

BIMALA CHURN LAW, PH D, M A, B L

Author of A History of Pāli Literature, Life & Work of Buddhaghosa, Some Kṣatriya Tribes of Ancient India, etc

WITH A FOREWORD BY
THE MOST HON'BLE THE MARQUESS OF ZETLAND,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA



PUBLISHED FOR THE KERN INSTITUTE LEIDEN
BY H J PARIS 104 KEIZERSGRACHT AMSTERDAM HOLLAND
1937

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

The stimulus given to research by the late Sir Asutosh Mukherji when as Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University he set on foot an ambitious scheme of postgraduate studies, has brought into existence a body of Indian research workers who for some years past have been carrying on work first undertaken by European scholars of world-wide reputation Prominent amongst those who have turned their attention to the early history and philosophy of the Hindus is Dr Bimala Churn Law who has to his credit a number of volumes throwing light on the history and culture of the peoples who some four or five hundred years before the Christian era, inhabited that part of India of which Patna, the capital of the modern province of Bihar, is now the centre It was here that Buddha lived and preached the doctrine of which Dr Law gives us in the present volume a scholarly analysis based upon a careful study of the original texts

In its main outlines the doctrine of Buddhism is now pretty widely known But a full understanding of it must necessarily depend upon the interpretation placed upon the many technical terms and phrases in which it abounds and it is this task of interpretation that Dr Law sets out to discharge It is not without significance that two of the shortest and most widely known words in the literature of Buddhism — *Dhamma* and *Nibbāna* — are precisely the words which have given rise to the greatest degree of controversy

It is not surprising, therefore to find that it is to the concepts indicated by these two words that Dr Law devotes the greatest amount of space It may be that the reader of his chapter on *Nibbana* will leave it with the conclusion that it was not the least element in Buddha s greatness that unlike the generality of mankind — even of Buddhist mankind — he remained unmoved by the logical conclusion of the human mind handicapped by the necessity under which it labours of functioning within the limits of time and space, that Nibbāna is the equivalent of extinction

To follow the author in his examination of these two concepts would demand far more space than the writer of a foreword is entitled to; let me therefore, by way of illustration of Dr Law's analyses, take one of the less difficult of the concepts of Buddhism, namely, that of the Four Noble Truths in which are proclaimed the existence, the cause and the possibility of escape from suffering and finally the means of escape by way of the Noble Eightfold Path. The steps in the Noble Eightfold Path — right view, right resolve, right speech, etc — are well known; what is less well known is their precise significance, and it is this that Dr Law proceeds to explain. His analysis of the concept constituting the first of the Four Noble Truths — *Dukkha*, the affirmation that all existence is suffering — may be taken as an example of his method. *Dukkha*, whether of the body or of the mind, is conditioned by certain circumstances, and in the absence of such circumstances it cannot occur. These circumstances may be described compendiously as the day to day experiences of conscious life; and if the succession of such experiences or happenings cannot be changed it is at least open to the harassed mortal to enquire if there be any state of consciousness, on attaining to which an individual is no longer affected by life's vicissitudes. The answer given by Buddhism affirms that there is attainable a state in which the consciousness of the individual is wholly unrelated to anything to which in life as we know it we can apply the term 'object'. The tried method of reaching that state is *Jhana* or *Samādhi*. *Jhana* or *Samādhi* is therefore, according to Dr Law, the central point in the Noble Eightfold Path, the other seven practices constituting steps leading up to it. But neither *Jhāna* nor *Samādhi* is the simple concept which the above account might lead one to suppose, and Dr Law devotes a chapter based on a wide selection of texts from the Buddhist scriptures and commentaries to a careful analysis of these essentially important terms. Here we pass into the higher realm of abstract thought and the reader must follow carefully in the footsteps of the author himself.

I am tempted to make one further reference to the subject matter of Dr Law's volume, namely, to his chapter on *Puggala* in which the case for and against the existence of an individual as a permanent entity is discussed. It will be remembered how in the *Milindapañha* or 'Questions of King Milinda' the King is driven

by the inexorable logic of the Sage Nāgasena into admitting that there can be no such thing as an individual soul How then, it will naturally be asked can there be rebirth the chief of the evils which it is the object of the Buddhist to escape since to speak of re-incarnation when there is no soul to take on flesh or of transmigration when there is no entity to migrate, is merely to indulge in a contradiction in terms? Nāgasena the Sage had his answer Dr Law has his Indeed with happy condensation he crystallises the Buddhist view on this vexed question in a single sentence —
With the Buddhist rebirth is to be conceived as *Kammasantati* or the continuity of an impulse

The many other concepts of Buddhism including that of the Wheel of Causation with the twelve *nidanas* as its motive force and the doctrine of *Kamma*, the Pali spelling and the Buddhist version of the Sanskrit doctrine of *Karma* which constitutes the warp upon which the threads of the whole variegated philosophy of Hinduism is woven, will be found similarly analysed in the pages which follow But I have said enough perhaps to make it clear that scholar and layman alike will find good value in the lucid exposition of these and other concepts of Buddhism which Dr Law gives us

ZETLAND
16 8 1936

PREFACE

In this little treatise an attempt has been made to deal with some of the important concepts of Buddhism: Saraṇa (Profession of Faith), Pāramitā (Perfection), Jāti (Caste), Ariyasacca (Four Noble Truths), Ariya aṭṭhaṅgika Magga (Noble Eightfold Path), Jhāna (Meditation), Puggala (Individuality and Personality), Paṭiccasamuppāda (Dependent Origination), Kamma (Volition), Dhamma and Nibbāna. I must confess that it has not been an easy task to handle the subject, as the main concepts of Buddhism still require a very careful consideration before saying anything definitely about them. I have, however, spared no pains to throw some new light on the subject from the texts that have not been accorded the treatment they deserve.

I must acknowledge my gratitude to the Most Honourable The Marquess of Zetland, P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Secretary of State for India, who has very kindly contributed a foreword to this treatise in spite of the heavy burden of his duties. I remain ever grateful to him for the interest he takes in my researches.

The Kern Institute of Holland has done me a great honour by accepting this treatise as their monograph for which I am greatly thankful to the authorities of the Institute and especially to my esteemed friend Professor J. Ph. Vogel, C.I.E., Ph.D.

BIMALA CHURN LAW

43, Kailas Bose Street,
Calcutta, the 9th September,
1930.

CHAPTER I

SARANA

(*Profession of Faith*)

In popular usage the word *sarana* means a shelter a place where a man driven by fear, seeks shelter or protection The Buddhist texts mention mountains and forests, gardens and trees as places of shelter which are not considered by the Buddhists to be the real places of shelter [1] With the Buddhists the term *Saranas* or Refuges are the Triad the Buddha the Doctrine and the Order Each of these Refuges is a supreme object of devotion and worship The Buddha is said to have established the converts in three Saranas The usual formula by which a Buddhist takes refuge in the Triad is as follows

Buddham saranam gacchāmi
Dhammam saranam gacchāmi,
Sangham saranam gacchāmi

This formula is recited on all solemn occasions and is thrice repeated [2]

According to Buddhaghosa and other Pāli commentators *Saranāgamana* is not a mere formal recital of one s faith in the Triad but an expression of self devotion to an object and communion [3] *Saranāgamana* serves to establish a relation between the worshipper and the worshipped If a person taking refuge in the Triad is ordained as a member of the Holy Order he is called a Bhikkhu and if such a person sticks to household life he is called an *Upāsaka* or layman *Upasanā* or an act of worship constitutes the mark of an

---

[1] *Dhammapada* 188
Bahum ve saranam yanti pabbatāni vanāni ca ārāmarukkhacetyāni manussā bhayatajjitā

[2] *Vinaya Mahāvagga* p 2–

[3] *Sumangala vilāsinī* I p 231 *Paramatthajotikā* I p 16 *Tappasāda tabbagarukatāhi vihata kilesa tapparāyanatākārappavatto cittuppādo saranāgamanam*

Upasaka[1] *Saranāgamana* is of two kinds *lokika* (common) and *lokuttara* (uncommon) *Lokika sarana* contemplates the tangible attributes of the Triad while the *lokuttara sarana* aims at *nirvāna* as the supreme object of attainment[2] Buddhaghosa speaks of the following four modes of *saranagamana*

(1) Self-dedication (*atta sanniyyātanena*)
(2) Having the mind bent upon the object (*tapparayanataya*)
(3) Entering into relation as a disciple (*sissabhāvūpaga nanena*)
(4) Adoration (*panipātena*)

The first mode is defined as conscious dedication of oneself to the Triad The second mode consists in entertaining the Triad as the final end or ideal The third mode consists in conscious acceptance of the position of a disciple or follower in relation to the Triad The fourth mode consists in the act of saluting honouring and glorifying the Triad In following the fourth mode the devotee must believe that the object of worship is the highest of its kind (*aggadakkhineyya*)[3]

Buddha, the first member of the Triad means the Enlightened or Awakened One According to the Upanisads *Buddha* in the sense of the Awakened occurs as a predicate of Soul *Suprabuddha* is the epithet of the *arhats*[4] *Sammāsambuddha* and *Pacceka-Buddha* are self made personalities They are called self-made because they attain *mukti* by their own efforts without the aid of any teacher A *Srāvaka Buddha* is one who has become a saint by following the teachings of a Master A *Buddha* is also called a *Bhagava* According to the *Mahaniddesa*[5] and the *Paramatthajotika*[6], the epithet *Bhagava* was bestowed on the Buddha neither by his parents nor by his other relations It was acquired by him on his attainment of omniscience *Bhagavā* is equal to *bhagavatta* one endowed with *bhaga*, which in its generally accepted sense means the sixfold supreme possession of *issariya*, *dhamma* *yasa* *sirī* *kāma* and *payatana* *Issariya* com-

---

[1] *Sumangala vilasinī* I p 234 *Upasakavidhi upasako*
Ibidem I p 231
[3] *Ibidem* I pp 231 foll
[4] *Dhammapada* verses 296—301
pp 142—143
[6] I pp 107—109

prehends the idea of such qualities as *anima* and the rest *Dhamma* means the transcendental virtues *Yasa* implies a pure fame of universal recognition *Siri* connotes an all-round accomplishment *Kāma* signifies all objects of desire *Pavatana* means the supreme effort to gain sovereignty over all Bhagavābhajī or bhattavā one who has recourse to i e has the experience of all things *Bhagavā* = *bhāgī* means the participator of all acquisitions *Bhagavā* = *vibhattavā* means one who explains things by apportionment or method of analytical distinction *Bhagavā* = *bhaggakarī*, i e the destroyer of all evils *Bhagavā* = *garu* the master who is superior to all *Bhagavā* = *bhagyavā*, the fortunate or blessed one *Bhagavā* = *bhavantaga* i e, one who has gone beyond individual existence *Bhagavā* = *subhavitatta*, i e, one who has fully developed himself[1]

The following attributes are ascribed to Buddha in the tract called *Dhammādāsa* or Mirror of Faith' That he is the Blessed One endowed with faculties and noble conduct well-gone perfect in his knowledge of the world, unsurpassed guide to persons coming in for training a teacher to gods and men the Enlightened One the Master[2]

A Buddha is also called a Tathāgata for the following reasons (1) he has come in the same way (2) he has gone in the same way, (3) he is endowed with the sign of *tatha* (4) he is supremely enlightened in *tathadhamma* (5) he has seen *tathā* (6) he preaches *tathā* (7) he does *tathā* truthfully and (8) he overcomes all[3]

Dhamma, the second of the Triad signifies a doctrine which is well-expounded which bears fruit in this very life, which is not conditioned by time which has come and see for its motto, which leads to the destination or desired end and which is to be experienced by the wise individually'[4] The Dhamma embodying all the tenets of the Master was to take the place of the Master in his absence After the demise of the Buddha one of his disciples declared *Mayam dhammapatisarana* the Doctrine is indeed our

---

[1] Barua & Sinha *Barhut Inscriptions* p 42 f n 1

[2] *Iti pi so Bhagavā araham sammā sambuddho vijjācarana sampanno sugato loka vidū anuttaro purisadamma sārathi satthā deva manussānam Buddho Bhagavā ti* *Digha II p 93*

[3] B C Law *A History of Pāli Literature* II pp 412 ff

[4] *Digha* II p 93

Refuge now[1] For this and other aspects of *Dhamma vide* Chap on Dhamma

Sangha, the third of the Triad, includes *Bhikkhu sangha* and *Bhikkhunī-sangha* It really means *Sāvaka sangha* or a fraternity of disciples *Sangha* literally means *samūha* or group In early Pāli literature some of the famous teachers of India are mentioned as *sanghī* (founder of an order) *ganī* (having a following) and *ganacariyo* (teacher of a group) At the time of the rise of Buddhism, the Vrjis Mallas, and other Kṣatriya tribes were known as *Ganarājās* or republican chiefs Even the Śākyas had their *gana* form of administration A *sangha* is a corporate body which is characterised by the uniformity of creed and conduct (*Diṭṭhi-sīlasamghātena samghāto ti samgho*)[2] *Samaggatā* or internal cohesion constitutes the real life of a Sangha as such The unity of action and commonness of goal characterise its external life Thus the *sangha* stands essentially as a symbol of unity The Buddha compares the *sangha* to an ocean into which all individual rivers ultimately fall assuming the common name of the ocean According to the Buddhist Mirror of Faith, Sangha *par excellence* is composed of all Ariyan disciples who fill eight exalted positions

---

[1] *Majjhima* III p 9

[2] *Sumangala vilāsinī* I p 230 *Paramatthajotikā* I p 20

CHAPTER II

PĀRAMITĀ

(*Perfection*)

Pāramī[1] is the same term as *Pāramitā* and both occur side by side in Dhammapāla's commentary on the *Cariyapiṭaka*.[2] So far as later Buddhist literature goes, the bulk of Pāli works shows predilection for *paramī* and that of Sanskrit works for *pāramitā*. In the Pāli canonical texts, however, *paramī* is the only form met with. In the *Nidhikanda-sutta* we have *sāvaka-pāramī*, the perfection of discipleship which is no other than the fruition stage of arhatship, the ripeness of saintship which is the ideal before a Buddhist learner or aspirant. In the *Buddhavaṃsa*, on the other hand, the term *pāramī* is employed as a synonym of *Buddhakāra dhammā*, the virtues or qualities which tend towards making a Budha, i.e. maturing the life of a Bodhisattva for the attainment of Buddhahood in his last birth. Precisely in this sense Dhammapāla uses the term *Buddhakāraka dhammā* and quotes a passage of canonical authority with bearing on the point. The passage cannot be traced in the Pāli Text Society's edition of the *Tipiṭaka*. Even if its antiquity be doubted on this ground (which is not very reasonable), there is the text of the *Buddhavaṃsa* to show that at least as far back as the 2nd century B.C. *paramī* was treated as another term for *Buddhakarā* or *Buddhakāraka dhammā*. It goes also to show that already in that time the Pāramīs were counted as ten in Theravāda Buddhism[3], while the prose passage quoted by Dhammapāla clearly speaks of *dasa Buddhakārakā dhammā*.

---

[1] *Pārami* or *Pāramitā* means perfection, completeness or highest state.

[2] *Cariyāpiṭakaṭṭhakathā* (Ceylonese ed.), p. 7: *Buddhaguṇānaṃ* [illegible] *Buddhakārakadhammā pāramiyo* [illegible] *pāramitā* [illegible]

[3] This is clearly implied in counting *mettā* as the 9th *pāramī* (*navamaṃ mettā pāramiṃ*) and closing the enumeration with *upekkhā* occurring after *mettā*.

The quotations from the *Cariyapitaka*, the *Jātaka-nidana katha* and the *Cariyapitaka* commentary presuppose a Canonical text compared with which the P T S edition appears to be incomplete These quotations fully attest that ten were the *Pāramīs* recognized in *Theravāda* Buddhism when the *Cariyāpitaka* was compiled and taken into the corpus of the Pāli Canon along with and as an adjunct to the *Buddhavamsa* Thus any surmise or conclusion drawn on the basis of the incomplete text of the *Cariyāpitaka* regarding the number of *Pāramīs* is apt to be misleading

These considerations may warrant the statement that when the conception of *Paramitā* developed in Buddhalogy the *Theravada* school counted the *Paramīs* as ten while in the Sanskrit works belonging mostly to the *Sarvastivāda school*, the *Paramīs* are counted as six

The ten *Pāramīs* as enumerated in *Theravāda* are *dāna* (alms-giving) *sīla* (morality) *nekkhamma* (renunciation), *paññā* (wisdom) *viriya* (energy) *khanti* (forbearance) *sacca* (truth), *adhitthāna* (resolution) *mettā* (friendliness) and *upekkha* (indifference) Each of them is practised in three degrees of intensity And the six *Paramitās* as recognized in Buddhist Sanskrit tradition are *dana sīla ksānti, vīrya dhyāna* and *prajñā* In order to get ten *paramitas* the following four are to be added viz *upaya, pranidhāna, bala* and *jñana* A Bodhisattva who has conceived an inspiration to become a Buddha advances in birth after birth to higher and higher sanctity in the practice of the ten perfections until at last he is born as the Buddha preaching the Law and passing away into the everlasting stillness of *Nirvana* as we find in the *Jatakas* An exactly accomplished Buddha should acquire all these *paramitās* Each of these *paramītās* may be sub-divided into (1) the ordinary (2) the interior and (3) the unlimited perfection of the virtue Childers is right in agreement with Clough in saying that *dānapāramita* expresses the duty in general terms and signifies acts of charity or making offerings without any reference to their nature or value (*vide* Childers Dict, p 335) A Bodhisattva after having exercised the ten *paramītās* in all the three degrees of their intensity in anterior births was destined to become an omniscient Buddha Thus we see that the attainment of Buddhahood is the consequence of the vast accumulation of merit in course of the exercise of the

pāramitās in previous births In order to attain Bodhi or enlightenment a Bodhisattva had to fulfil the ten *pāramitās* He had to undergo several births to fulfil each *pāramitā* In the *Jātakanidānakathā* we read that these ten *pāramitās* are the *Buddhakārakadhammā* i e , the precepts which make one Buddha The great Śākya prince Siddhārtha before attaining Bodhi found these *pāramitās* out to be the only means of attaining Buddhahood All the previous Buddhas also had to fulfil them in order to attain Buddhahood Siddhārtha performed these *pāramitās* Bodhisattva Sumedha fulfilled *dāna pāramitā* by giving in charity all the worldly things and his own life he fulfilled *sīla pāramitā* by observing precepts and without taking the least care for his own life, he fulfilled *nekkhamma pāramita* by renouncing household life like a prisoner always anxious to be released from the prison he fulfilled *puñña pāramitā* by learning whatever he could learn from anybody he fulfilled *viriya pāramita* by behaving like a lion the king of beasts he fulfilled *khanti pāramitā* by forbearing all the vicissitudes of life most patiently like the earth he fulfilled *sacca pāramitā* by not telling lies for fear of punishment or for temptation or even for the falling of thunder on his head he fulfilled *adhiṭṭhāna pāramita* by steadfastly adhering to his endeavour to become a Buddha like a mountain unmoved by storm coming from all directions he fulfilled *mettā pāramitā* by cherishing love and friendliness towards his friends and foes alike like water cooling both the virtuous and the sinner he fulfilled *upekkhā pāramitā* by being indifferent to happiness and suffering like the earth (cf *Jātaka nidānakathā* Vol I)

A Buddha is called *Dhammakāya* because he is the embodiment of these ten *pāramitas* Dr Barnett points out that *dāna pāramitā* is not an actual deliverance of the world from poverty but an intention for such deliverance it is a grace of the spirit Thus purity of the will is the greatest of all virtues and the foundation of all He further points out that *sīla pāramitā* consists essentially in the will to hurt no living creature (vide the Path of Light, Wisdom of the East Series p 98)

As for examples of *dana pāramita* we may refer to the following in the *Cariyāpiṭaka* — *Akitticariyam* (*Akitti Jataka Jataka* Vol IV), *Sankhacariyam* (*Sankhapala Jataka Jātaka* Vol V), *Kurudhammacariyam* (*Kurudhamma Jātaka, Jātaka* Vol II) *Mahasudas*-

sanacariyam (*Mahasudassana Jataka, Jataka,* Vol I), *Mahāgovindacariyam* (*Mahagovinda Suttanta, Dīgha Nikāya* Vol II) *Nimirājacariyam* (*Nimi Jātaka, Jataka,* Vol VI) *Candakumaracariyam* (*Khandahāla Jātaka Jataka,* Vol VI), *Sivirājacariyam* (*Sivi Jātaka, Jātaka,* Vol IV) *Vessantaracariyam* (*Vessantara Jataka Jataka* Vol VI), and *Sasapanditacariyam* (*Sasa Jataka, Jātaka* Vol III) The following are the instances of *sīla pāramitā* mentioned in the *Cariyāpitaka* —

Sīlavanagacariyam (*Sīlavanaga Jataka Jataka,* Vol I) *Bhūridattacariyam* (*Bhūridatta Jataka, Jātaka* Vol II) *Campeyyanāgacariyam* (*Campeyya Jātaka Jātaka* Vol IV) *Cūlabodhicariyam* (*Cullabodhi Jātaka Jātaka* Vol IV) *Mahimsarajacariyam* (*Mahisa Jataka Jataka* Vol II) *Rururajacariyam* (*Ruru Jātaka Jataka,* Vol IV) *Mātangacariyam* (*Matanga Jātaka Jataka* Vol IV) *Dhammādhammadevaputtacariyam* (*Dhamma Jātaka Jātaka* Vol IV) *Jayaddisacariyam* (*Jayaddisa Jātaka Jataka* Vol V), and *Sankhapālacariyam* (*Sankhapala Jataka Jātaka* Vol V)

The examples of *Nekkhamma pāramitā* can be found in the *Yudhañjayacariyam* (*Yuvañjaya Jataka Jātakā,* Vol IV) *Somanassacariyam* (*Somanassa Jataka Jataka* Vol IV) *Ayoghacariyam* (*Ayoghara Jataka Jataka* Vol IV) *Bhisacariyam* (*Bhisa Jātaka, Jataka* Vol IV) *Sonapanditacariya* (*Sonananda Jātaka, Jātaka,* Vol V) In the *Cariyāpitaka* only one instance of *adhitthāna pāramitā* is traceable in the *Temiyacariya* which corresponds to the *Temiya Jātaka* (*Jataka* VI) which is also known as the *Mūgapakkha Jataka* found in the *Jātaka* Vol II As for examples of *sacca pāramitā* we may cite the following —

Kapirajacariyam (*Kapi Jataka Jātaka* Vol II) *Saccasavhayapanditacariyam* (*Saccankira Jātaka Jātaka* Vol I) *Vattapotakacariyam* (*Vatta Jataka Jataka* Vol I) *Maccharājacariyam* (*Maccha Jātaka, Jātaka,* Vol I) *Kanhadīpāyanacariyam* (*Kanhadīpāyana Jātaka Jataka* Vol IV) and *Sutasomacariyam* (*Mahasutasoma Jātaka, Jātaka* Vol V) *Mahalomahamsacariyam* of the *Cariyāpitaka* which corresponds to the *Lomahamsa Jataka* in *Jataka* Vol I, is the only instance of *Upekkha pāramitā* *Suvannasamacariyam* (*Sāma Jataka Jātaka* Vol VI) and *Ekarājacariyam* (*Ekaraja Jātaka Jātaka* Vol III) are the instances of *Metta pāramitā* as found in the *Cariyāpitaka* The *Cariyāpitaka* is the only work of the Pāli

Canon in which a brief and systematic account of Buddhist *pāramitā* is given although references are found scattered here and there in the *Pali Nikāyas*

The Mahāyāna Buddhist texts are replete with information regarding the fulfilment of *pāramitās* by the Bodhisattva In the *Śraddhotpādasūtra*, Asvaghosa points out that the Bodhisattvas know that the nature of the *dharma* is the perfection of spotless charity, and they being free from covetousness, practise *dāna pāramitā* They know that the nature of the *dharma* being free from the influence of five sensual pleasures and being free from immorality is the perfection of stainless morality and they being far above all these vices, practise *sīla pāramita* They know that the nature of the *dharma* is the perfection of stainless patience, and they being free from malice practise *khanti pāramitā* They know that the nature of the *dharma* is the perfection of pure energy, they being free from indolence, practise *virya pāramitā* They know that the nature of the *dharma* having nothing to do with disturbance and confusion is the perfection of pure tranquillisation they practise *dhyana pāramita* They know that the nature of the *dharma* is the perfection of pure wisdom they being free from darkness of ignorance practise *prajñā pāramita* (cf The Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna by Suzuki, pp 122—123 vide also outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism by Suzuki p 69)

Thus we see that the *pāramitas* are the excellences of a Bodhisattva who never gets tired of practising the ten virtues of perfection A Bodhisattva in order to obtain Bodhi or enlightenment has to fulfil ten *pāramīs* (*pāramitās*) The *Jātakamalā* [1] the *Mahāvastu* [2] and the *Avadānakalpalatā* [3] contain instances of *pāramitas* The idea of *pāramita* is similar according to Northern and Southern Schools of Buddhism with slight variations as noticed above

We may agree with Dr Barua in thinking that the Pāramitā doctrine had its root in the age-old Indian conception of faith (*saddhā*) particularly as developed in a *Sutta* of the *Majjhima-*

[1] It contains [illegible] birth stories ten of which have the same titles as those of the *Cariyāpiṭaka* tales

[2] e g *Vānara Jātaka* and *Mahā* [illegible]

[3] e g Stories of Sivi *Sasa* *Matsya* *Vattapotaka* *Ruru* and *Sutasoma*

Nikaya and that as it is its main importance lies in its bearing on the problem of evolution of personality, whether of the *Buddha* type, or of the *Savaka* or of the *Paccekabuddha*[1] The Pāli book entitled *Apadāna* contains copious illustrations of how the Sāvaka-pāramī was attained by a large number of men and women as the ripe result of their age-long efforts In heightening the importance of the moral excellence of Buddhist personalities the doctrine had necessarily to lay stress on the prolonged character of strivings, and in doing so it destroyed the belief in the immediate prospects held out by Gotama and transferred the possibility of final fruition to an indefinitely long date[2]

---

[1] B M Barua's *Faith in Buddhism* (Law's *Buddhistic Studies* pp 3-9 ff) and *Mahāyāna in the Making* (*Proceedings of the Second Oriental Conference*)
[2] Barua's *Mahāyana in the Making* (*Proceedings of the Second Oriental Conference*)

CHAPTER III

JĀTI

(*Caste*)

Jāti is the generally accepted Indian term to denote caste *Varna* is another term to denote the same In Pali we meet with the term *Jātivibhanga* or *Jatibheda* used in the sense of caste distinction But the term *Jativāda* is used to signify the tradition built up by a family or a race or a school The problem of caste was approached by the Buddhists from three different points of view — (1) biological (2) occupational and (3) cultural (1) As a biological term *Jati* conveys the same meaning as *nikāya* or genus The main criterion of genera is that they are mutually exclusive in the sense that sexual union for the purpose of procreation is not possible between them Each genus consists of a number of species bearing some common characteristics e g the two main divisions of the genus plant are represented by grass (*tina*) and trees (*rukkha*) The difference between grasses and trees lies in the fact that the former are pithless within and are pithy without (*antopheggūni bahisarāni, Sutta Nipata Commy* II p 464) and the latter are just the opposite (*bahipheggū antosārā*) The palm trees, cocoanut trees and the rest judged by the above characteristics come under the class grass The insects the flies the ants form three different genera while the hare the cat, and the rest form a class by themselves The genus bird too may be thus shown to consist of various species The similarity of bodily forms, habit of life and the like is a common characteristic of the species belonging to the same genus If this be applied as a test of difference of genera among men the Buddhists argue that human beings cannot be taken to represent any more than one species as between a brahmin and a member of any other caste there is absolutely no difference to be noticed in respect of bodily forms (*Sutta N* verses 608—611) the habit of life and the rest Further sexual union for the purpose of procreation is possible between any two human beings if they are male and female The

upshot of the biological argument employed by the Buddhists is that the Brahmins the Kṣatriyas, the Vaiśyas and the Śūdras do not represent *jāti* in the sense of species They all belong to one and the same species Thus according to the Buddhists, it cannot be maintained that a brahmin is a brahmin by birth It is claimed that if both father and mother be persons of high social status, and both of them be persons of high moral character, the progeny born of them will be of a higher type of human beings The Buddhists hold that the accidence of birth cannot invariably determine the quality or potentiality of the progeny A brahmin is a brahmin by qualities and not by accidence of birth (*Evam sante na jātiyā brāhmano gunehi pana brāhmano hoti Sutta N Commy,* II 464—466)

(2) Failing to establish caste distinction (*Jātibheda*) on a biological ground the Buddhists proceed to discuss whether and how far the distinction can be justified on occupational ground

With them the distinction mainly rests on a difference in occupations of life He who among men lives by cultivation is a cultivator he who lives by handicraft is an artisan he who lives by trade is a trader he who lives by earning wages is a labourer he who lives by theft is a thief he who lives by waging war is a warrior he who lives by acting as a *purohita* is a priest and he who lives by governing a kingdom is a king (*Sutta Nipata* verses 612—619) [1] Thus the position taken up by the Buddhists may be reduced to

---

[1] Yo hi koci manussesu gorakkham upajīvati
evam Vāsettha jānāhi kassako so na brahmano
Yo hi koci manussesu puthu sippena jīvati
evam Vāsettha jānāhi sippiko so na brahmano
Yo hi koci manussesu vohāram upajīvati
evam Vāsettha janāhi vānijo so na brāhmano
Yo hi koci manussesu parapessena jīvati
evam Vāsettha jānāhi pessiko so na brahmano
Yo hi koci manussesu adinnam upajīvati
evam Vāsettha janāhi coro eso na brahmano
Yo hi koci manussesu issattham upajīvati
evam Vāsettha jānāhi yodhajīvo na brāhmano
Yo hi koci manussesu porohiccena jīvati
evam Vāsettha jānāhi yājako so na brāhmano
Yo hi koci manussesu gāmam ratthañ ca bhuñjati
evam Vāsettha janāhi rājā eso na brahmano

this that the social status of a person is determined and determinable by means of occupation or livelihood (*Kammana*)

(3) *Jāti* as a cultural term is entertained by the Buddhists as a mainstay of man's virtue *Jati* as an arrogant feeling which impels a man to look down upon other fellow beings is severely criticised but *jāti* as a moral or cultural tradition is highly valued Each class of men by following a course of good conduct builds up a tradition for itself which has a high value in life as an incentive to betterment of the race and as a check to moral degradation The tradition awakens in men self consciousness which is essential to moral progress The defiance of the cultural tradition thus built up leads to man's fall (*Jātimadam niramkatvā kamanam vasam upagamum — Sutta Nipata* verse 315)

With the Buddhists *Jati* was also a term to denote the moral disposition of a person The Ājivikas divided human beings into six main types according to six such dispositions each disposition being expressed in terms of a colour *Kanhabhijāti* (of a black disposition) *Lohitābhijāti* (of a red disposition) *haliddābhijāti*[1] (of a yellow disposition) and the like The *Mahabharata* substitutes *varna* for *abhijati* the Pali *sarabhijātiyo* being the same expression as the Sanskrit *satjivavarnah* The word *jātiko* is used in Pali in the sense of *sabhavo ukhumkajatiko* signifying a person of a boisterous nature In the Edicts of Asoka the word *jata* has been used precisely in the sense of moral trait or disposition These traits be not mine — is to be wished for (*ete jātā no huveu mamāti*) — Separate Rock Edict no I Envy quick loss of temper cruelty impatience want of application laziness and lethargy are mentioned as specific examples of such *jatas* Going by this text the abiding moral trait or disposition is the real determining factor of racial or personal type

With the Brahmanists, the caste system is of a divine origin It devolved as though from the very beginning of creation out of the created form of *Nārāyana* himself According to the Buddhist *Aggañña suttanta* the entire social order including the state and the

---

[1] *Anguttara Nikāya* III p 384

caste divisions developed gradually among men according to social needs The *sutta* repudiates the divine origin of both the state and social order According to this Buddhist *sutta* the caste distinctions had originated in differences in occupations or means of livelihood In other words it is the class which afterwards hardened into caste All the arguments of the Buddhists against the Brahmanic theory of caste which lie scattered in different Pāli *suttas* have been summed up in the concluding chapter of the *Divyāvadāna* (Chap 33) The *Divyāvadana* opines Just as thoughtless children while playing about on a high road heap up dust and sand in different shapes and christened them saying this is milk this is curd this is meat and this is ghee just so stand the four *Varnas* as expounded by the Brahmins [1]

The arguments in the *Vasettha sutta* are re-stated more effectually in the *Divyāvadana* The biological classification of living beings according to genera and species (*linga* and *jāti*) may be made and maintained on the ground of similarity or difference in bodily forms, habit and other characteristics but the application of biological test cannot be established that human beings belong to species more than one As a matter of fact there is one species among men all of them possessing common characteristics (*ekaiva jātir loke smin sāmanya na prithagvidha Divyāvadāna* p 625) The Brāhmanas the Kshatriyas the Vaiśyas and the Śūdras are all names arbitrarily fixed A name so fixed has no especial connotation of its own Suppose four sons are born in a family and their father chooses to call one *Nandaka* (gladdener) one *Jīvaka* (the living) one *Asoka* (sorrowless) and one *Śatāyu* (the long lived) It cannot be deduced from these names that one who is called *Nandaka* is actually the person who gladdens one who is called *Jīvaka* is actually the person who lives one who is called *Asoka* is actually the person who is free from sorrow and one who is called *Śatāyu* is actually the person who lives a hundred years There are certain distinctive moral intellectual or occupational traits acquired or developed by

[1] *Yathā hi cārulā bālāh krīdamanā mahāpathe*
pāmsupuñjam sampindya stavanti nāmāni kurvate
idam kshiram idam dadhi idam māmsam idam ghritam
na ca bālasya vacanāt pāmsavo nnam bhavanti hi
varnās tathaiva catvāro yathā brāhmana bhāshase (*Divyāvadana* p 626)

different persons as they grow up in life but these distinctive traits cannot be predicated of persons because of their birth in a certain home and by the union of certain parents (*Divyāvadāna* pp 629—630) The differences that exist among men are primarily individual in character The degree of difference in moral, intellectual and occupational qualities which may be shown to exist between a so-called Brahmin and a so-called *śūdra* may equally be shown to exist between two sons born of the same parents According to time honoured customs of India a Brahmin is allowed to marry from all the four castes a *ksatriya* from three a *vaisya* from two and a *sūdra* from one only which is his own caste Thus a Brahmin may be the father of four sons by his four wives from different castes the son gaining the social status of his mother There is no invariable law that given equal chances the son by the Brahmin mother will excel one born by the *sūdra* mother The status of the four sons is determined arbitrarily

It is claimed that the Brahmin is generated from the mouth of Brahmā the *Ksatriya* from the thigh the *Vaisya* from the navel, and the *Śūdra* from the feet This is only an allegory which is not suggestive of any congenital difference between a Brahmin and a *Ksatriya* between a *Ksatriya* and a *Vaisya* or between a *Vaisya* and a *Śūdra* The allegory rather suggests that the difference had originated in the difference in the training and occupation That is to say, it is the *karma* which determines the difference among men in social status There is no such certitude that a Brahmin will be reborn after his death in the *brahmaloka* because he is a Brahmin and a *Śūdra* will be reborn in a lower world because he is a *Śūdra* The destiny of each person is individually determined by his good or bad deeds

At the time of the Buddha Gautama there were four classes of the people viz *Khattiyas Brahmanas Vessas and Suddas* They were known as *cattaso vannā* or the four castes *Vanna* literally means colour, some translate it as appearance In the Buddhist books [1] *Khattiyas* have been given preference over the *Brahmanas* whereas in the Brahmin literature the *Brahmanas* occupy the first place The *Upanishads* speak of the *Khattiya* superiority and in the

[1] Cf *Ambattha Sutta D N* I *Aggañña Sutta* of *D N* III *Lalitavistara* ch III

Chāndogya the superior learning of the *Khattiyas* is frequently referred to. Of these four castes the *Khattiyas* and the *Brāhmanas* have been given precedence in salutation, homage, obeisance and the due ministry.[1] The Buddha did not lay much stress on the caste distinctions which he said were unscientific. In the *Ambattha Sutta* the Buddha is said to have refuted the charge of Ambattha by saying that the *Śakyas* among whom he was born were not menials but *Khattiyas* and that *Ambattha*, a *Kanhāyana Brāhmana*, was a descendant of a slave girl. Moreover he tried to prove that the *Khattiyas* were superior to the *Brāhmanas*.

Khattiya is the lord of the fields. This term means a '*Rajā*' which is taken in the sense of a nobleman. There are good and bad nobles. A bad noble deprives a living being of life, is a thief, is unchaste, speaks lies, slanders, uses rough words, is greedy, malevolent, and holds wrong views. A good noble, on the other hand, abstains from murder, theft, unchastity, lying, slandering, gossiping, greed, malevolence and false opinions (*Aggañña Suttanta, Dīgha N.*). It is distinctly stated that the *Khattiyas* are the best of the four classes (cf. *Majjhima Nikāya*, I, 358; *S.N.* I, 153, II, 284 and *Aggañña Sutta*).[2] A son born of a Brāhmin maiden by a *Ksatriya* youth was eligible for receiving seat and water as tokens of great respect from the *Brāhmanas* for partaking of the feast offered to the dead or of the food boiled in milk, or of the offerings to gods, or of the food sent as a present, for learning the sacred verses of the *Brahmanas* and marrying *Brahmana* girls. But he was not allowed to receive the consecration ceremony of a *Ksatriya* because he was not of pure descent on his mother's side. The same privileges could also be enjoyed by one born of a *Ksatriya* maiden by a *Brahmana* youth (*Ambattha Sutta, Dīgha N. I*). It should be noted that if a *Ksatriya* was outlawed by other *Ksatriyas* he was eligible for enjoying all the privileges mentioned above from the hands of the *Brāhmanas*. So we find that even when a *Ksatriya* had fallen into

---

[1] *Majjhima Nikāya, Sutta no. 90.—Cattāro me mahārāja vaṇṇā—Khattiyā, Brāhmaṇā, Vessā, Suddā. Imesaṃ kho mahārāja catunnaṃ vaṇṇānaṃ dve vaṇṇā aggam akkhāyanti—khattiyā ca brāhmaṇā ca yadidaṃ abhivādana-paccuṭṭhānañjalikammasāmīcikamman ti.*

[2] *Khattiyo seṭṭho jane tasmiṃ ye gottapaṭisārino vijjācaraṇasampanno so seṭṭho devamānuse.*

the deepest degradation it held good that the *Ksatriyas* were superior and the *Brāhmanas* inferior (Cf *Majjhima Nikāya* I 358)

Next we take up the case of the Brahmins who were proud of their caste It happened that a Brahmin out of homage partook of the leavings of food from the man of the lowest caste but as soon as he had eaten, he thought that he had disgraced his birth, his clan and his family because he had taken the leavings of a churl His remorse was so very keen that he plunged into the jungle not to show his face to the human world, where he died forlorn (*Jāt*, II 57)

The Brahmins were so very proud of their caste that in one instance we find that a Brahmin when he grew old said to his son thus Don t let my body be burnt in a cemetery where any outcaste can be burnt, but find some uncontaminated place to burn me in (*Jāt*, Cowell, II 37)

The Pāli literature mentions the following kinds of *Brāhmanas* (1) *Udiccadesa Brahmanas*, i e Brahmins who lived in the Northern of North-western country (*Jāt* I 178 210 240, 263) (2) *Kāsī Brahmanas* i e Brahmins who lived at *Kāsī* (*Jāt* II, 50 59 115), (3) *Brāhmanas of Rājagaha and Magadha* who were very superstitious holding false views and believing in luck (*Jāt* I 215) (4) *Brahmanas of Bhāradvāja Gotta* (*Vide Tevijja Sutta Dīgha Nikaya*, I), and (5) *Kanhayana Brāhmanas*[1] It is one of the famous sayings of the Buddhists —

> Foremost in virtue were the men of old
> Those brahmins who remembered ancient rules
> In them well-guarded were the doors of sense
> They had achieved the mastery of wrath
> In meditation and the Norm they took delight
> Those brahmins who remembered ancient rules
>
> (*S N Salāyatana-vagga 'Book of the Kindred Sayings*, IV, p 74)

Brahmins in name there were many but real Brahmins could hardly be found The *Jātaka* relates a story of the dearth of good and real Brāhmanas (*Jat* Cowell IV 227) In it is given a descrip-

[1] *Mantānam kattāro mantānam pavattāro* = makers of *mantras* and repeaters of *mantras* *Dīgha* I 239

tion of ten kinds of Brahmins who have lost their Brahminhood

A true Brahmin is one who has removed all sinfulness, who is free from haughtiness impurity, and greed who is an accomplished master of the Veda, and has fulfilled the duties of holiness (*Vinaya Texts*, p 79, S B E, XIII *Mahāvagga* 1st *Khandaka*) He eats only one meal of rice a day, and he never touches strong drink (*Jāt* IV 230) Besides he must be a repeater of the sacred words, knowing the mystic verses by heart, and he must have acquired the three Vedas with the indices the ritual phonology and the exegesis and the legend, be learned in the idioms and grammar, versed in *lokayata* reasoning and in the theory relating to the signs of the body of a great man (*Ambattha Suttanta, Dīgha N* I *Sonadanda Sutta Dīgha* I, p 120 Cf *A N* I 163 *Divyavadāna*, 620 etc)[1] In order to be a real *Brahmana* one must have five things In the first place he must be of pure birth and descent secondly he must know the threefold Vedic lore He must be an accomplished master of all Vedic *mantras* (*Dīpavamsa*, 5 61—71) and be proficient in allied branches of Brahmanical learning thirdly he must have handsome and pleasant appearance and fair colour fourthly, he must be virtuous, and lastly he must be learned and wise (*Sonadanda Sutta Digha* I) Buddha said in one of the *suttas* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*[2] that wisdom (*paññā*) and conduct (*sīla*) are necessary for constituting a true Brahmin (Cf, *Sonadanda Sutta*) We may call one a Brāhmana who is thoughtful blameless, settled and dutiful One should not attack a Brāhmana, but no Brahmana should let himself fly at his aggressor He should not offend others by body word or thought One does not become a Brāhmana by his plaited hair He in whom there are truth and righteousness is a Brāhmana A Brāhmana should meditate in a forest and must be free from bonds and attachments He should endure reproach and know the end of his suffering He should avoid life-slaughter He must be tolerant to the intolerant mild with the violent and free from

---

[1] [illegible] *sukkhavappabhedānam* [illegible] *mānam* [illegible] *lokāyata* [illegible]

[2] Wisdom in the sense of that which is the contrary of [illegible] ignorance or ignorance of the action of *Karma* of the four noble truths and of the doctrine of the [illegible]s or cardinal sins

greed among the greedy He must not utter harsh words He should not foster desire for this world or for the next He is a Brāhmana who has risen above ties and who is free from sin or impurity He is pure serene, undisturbed and bright like the moon He has abandoned all desires and has conquered all the world His passions are extinct He is noble, a hero a great sage, a conqueror the accomplished and the awakened He is perfect in knowledge and he is truly a sage (Vide *Brāhmanavagga Dhammapada*, pp 50—60 Cf *Vāsettha Sutta* of the *Sutta Nipāta Brahmayu Sutta* of the *M N* the *Brahmana Samyutta* of the *S N*, the *Janussoni Sutta* of the *A N* and so forth) A true Brahmin is he who is immune from the assaults of perception and who has no craving to be reborn either here or elsewhere He dwells with a clear conscience and without any perplexity

It is clear says T W Rhys Davids, that the word Brahmin in the opinion of the early Buddhists conveyed to the minds of the people an exalted meaning a connotation of real veneration and respect He further points out that If the contention of the Buddhists had been universally accepted and if the word Brahmin had come to mean not only a man of a certain descent but exclusively a man of a certain character and insight, then the present caste system of India could never have grown up The social supremacy of the Brāhmans by birth became accepted as an incontrovertible fact and the inflood of popular superstition which overwhelmed the Buddhist movement, overwhelmed also the whole pantheon of the Vedic gods Buddhism and Brahmanism alike passed practically away and modern Hinduism arose on the ruins of both (*Dialogues of the Buddha*, pt I, pp 140 sqq) It is one of the injunctions of the Buddha that every one having certain abilities should be allowed to teach and that if he does teach he should teach all keeping nothing back and shutting no one out (Introduction to the *Lohicca Sutta ibid* 285) It appears from this that a teacher belonging to a higher caste would not refuse to teach anybody belonging to an inferior caste It is interesting to note that the Brahmins at first gave themselves up to meditation Hence they were called *Jhayakas* but some people, being incapable of enduring meditation in forest leaf-huts engaged themselves in writing books hence they were called *Ajjhayakas*, or the repeaters of the Vedas

The Brahmins had their fivefold code for achieving the ideal This code consists of (1) The Truth (*sacca*) (2) Austerities (*tapa*) (3) Chastity (*brahmacariya*) (4) Study (of Vedic lore) and Munificence (*cāga*) — i e , to the Brahmins (Lord Chalmers, *Further Dialogues of the Buddha* I p xix)

Service was divided into four by the Brāhmanas service of a Brahmin of a noble of a middle class man and of a peasant Any member of all four classes might serve a Brahmin A noble might be served by another noble or by a middle class man or by a peasant A middle class man might be served by another middle-class man or by a peasant and a peasant might be served only by a peasant The Buddha refuted this selfish classification of the Brahmins and based his contention on moral and ethical grounds alone In the opinion of the Buddha, one should not assert that all services are to be rendered or that all services are to be refused If the service makes one bad and not good it should not be rendered But if it makes him better and not worse, then it should be rendered This is the guiding consideration which should decide the conduct of Brahmins nobles middleclass men and peasants The Buddha further points out that lineage does not enter into a man s living either good or bad (*Esukari Sutta* of *M N* , *Further Dialogues of the Buddha*, II p 100)

It appears from the comparative frequency of the discussions on the matter of Brahmin pretensions, that the subject of caste was a burning problem at the time of the composition of the *Nikayas* No other social problem is referred to so often and the Brahmins would not be so often represented as expressing astonishment or indignation at the position taken up regarding it by the early Buddhists unless there had really been a serious difference on the subject between the two schools But the difference though real, has been gravely misunderstood As Rhys Davids has said The disastrous effects from the ethical social and political points of view of these restrictions and of caste as a whole have been often grossly exaggerated and the benefits of the system ignored And we are entirely unwarranted in supposing the system as it now exists, to have been in existence also at the time when Buddhism arose in the valley of the Ganges Our knowledge of the actual facts of caste even as it now exists is still confused and inaccurate The theories

put forward to explain the facts are loose and irreconcilable [1] There was a common phrase current among the people which divided all the world into four *vannas* (colours or complexions) The priests put themselves first and had a theological legend in support of their contention But it is clear from the Pitakas that this was not admitted by the nobles And it is also clear that no one of these divisions was a caste There was neither *connubium* nor commensality between all members of one *vanna* nor was there a governing council for each

The fourth was distinguished from the other by social positions And though in a general rough way the classification corresponded to the actual facts of life there were insensible gradations within the four classes and the boundary between them was both variable and undefined The theory of caste or *Jāti* easily breaks down when we see that a Brahmin and a *Candala* do not differ from their physical constitution and can procreate children

Mahākaccāna was asked by King Avantiputta of Madhurā as to the Brahmanical claim that the Brahmins were superior to all other castes The king said The Brahmins maintain that they alone form the superior class all other classes being inferior The Brahmins alone form the white class all other classes being black That purity resides in Brahmins alone and not in non-Brahmins and that Brahmins are Brahmā s legitimate sons born from his mouth offsprings of his creations of his and his heirs Kaccāna convinced him of the equal footing of all the four classes inasmuch as any member of the four classes could when he had grown rich and wealthy employ any member of any of the other three classes as servants

The emptiness of the Brahmin claim to superiority is shown by the fact that if any one be he a noble Brahmin Vessa or Sudda kills, robs lies slanders covets harbours ill will is of bitter tongue or has a wrong outlook he after death must pass to a state of misery or woe, or to purgatory The same misery awaits each one who is guilty of such crimes It is also demonstrated by the fact that if any one be he a noble a middle class man or a peasant abstains from the crimes noted above, he passes after death to bliss and

[1] *Dialogues of the Buddha* pt I pp 96—97

heaven It can further be proved by the fact that if any one be he a Brahmin a noble a middle class man or a peasant is a burglar thief or house breaker, he is equally punished by the ruler of the realm irrespective of the caste of the accused It is also apparent from the fact that he whether Brahmin Vessa or Sūdda who cuts off his hair and beard, and dons the yellow robes and goes from house to house as a pilgrim abstaining from killing stealing and lying eating but one meal a day and living the higher life in virtue and goodness, such a one is honoured and respected and provided with all the necessities of life (*Madhura Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* II pp 83—90 cp *Assalayana Sutta M N* II pp 147 foll , and *Esukārī Sutta M N* , II, pp 177 foll where the Brahmin pretentions are also discussed) Thus we find that the *Madhura Sutta* deals with caste system under five heads It teaches that caste cannot ensure material success in life cannot save the wicked from punishment hereafter cannot debar the good from bliss hereafter cannot shield the evil-doers from criminal law and cannot affect the uniform veneration extended to the monk, whether be he sprung from the highest or the lowest of the four castes In all those important respects the four castes are equal Lord Chalmers is right in pointing out that this *sutta* does not go on to state nor does any other *sutta* venture to state, that in every possible respect the four castes were on one identical footing of equality Such a statement would have evinced a certain blindness to facts for although in all essentials caste was not an empty name to the Buddha yet the distinctions of caste had a residual sphere of activity and ranked among the accidents of life Whilst caste had no part in the higher life and was irrelevant in the less trivial of mundane relations yet there undoubtedly remained the region where in the absence of higher qualifications the hereditary distinctions of caste were accepted as an appropriate differentia between little men But into this trivial region Gautama disdained to enter He was content to explode the caste theory without denouncing it as a formal institution (*Vide J R A S* , 1894, p 348)

Brahmin wives of Brāhmanas have their periods and they are subject to conception How then can the Brahmins claim to be born of Brahmā s mouth? In the Yonakamboja and other adjacent countries, there are only two classes, masters and slaves A master

can become a slave and *vice versa* This does not at all lend any support to the Brahmin's claim It is clear therefore that the caste system of the Brahmins did not prevail in the Yonakamboja region

Not only a Brahmin but a man of other three classes can develop in his heart the love that knows no hate or ill Not only a Brahmin, but a man of other three classes also can go down to the river with his string of red bath balls to shampoo himself and rub off the dust and dirt The fire kindled by any one of the four classes blazes up with a bright flame and serves the purpose of a fire When a son is born to a young noble and a Brahmin maiden he is styled both a noble and a Brahmin when a son is born to a noble maiden and a young Brahmin he is styled both a Brahmin and a noble Between two uterine Brahmin brothers, of whom one is an educated scholar and the other not educated, Brahmins generally give preference to the educated one in making gifts but if the educated one is wicked and profligate and the uneducated one is virtuous the Brahmins generally give preference to the uneducated man Therefore the standard of distinction between *vanna* and *vanna* depends on purity and goodness (cp *Assalayana Sutta, M N* II 147—157) Here also we find that the Buddha speaks against the Brahmanical pretentions that the Brahmins are superior to all other castes (cf also *Ca[illegible] Sutta* II 164 177 where also the Buddha condemns the Brahmanical pretentions as to their superiority)

In the 6th or 5th century B C the Brāhmanas took up higher occupations to earn their livelihood They acted as chaplains (*Jataka* IV 188) ministers[1] and courtiers (*Jāt* II 166) The Brahmins also followed such lower professions as hunters (*Jat* II 14 III, 276), who used to kill many deer and live on them carpenters (*Jāt* IV 120) who used to bring wood from the forest and make carts goatherds (*Jat* III 342) and snake-charmers (*Jāt* IV 283)

We find many instances of greediness of the Brahmins in Buddhist literature The Brāhmanas thought exultantly of large sums of money and large supplies of food They sought in the dreams of kings pretexts for sacrifices and personal gain (*Jāt* I 187 cf *Jāt* I 255, where the Brāhmanas are described as a greedy lot) The

[1] It should be noted that the Kshatriyas also enjoyed the privilege of being ministers to the king (*Jātaka* III 102)

Buddha, while at Jetavana, spoke about a Brahmin retained by the King of Kosala who had the power of telling which swords were lucky, but who was very greedy The Brahmin made it a rule only to commend the work of those smiths who gave him presents, while he rejected the work of those who did not bribe him (*Jāt* I, 277) A Brahmin who was appointed as a judge by the King of Benares was addicted to accepting bribes (*Jāt* VI 69)

The Brahmin students like the Ksatriyas, were admitted into the University of Taxila They were like the Ksatriyas taught the three Vedas and various arts (*Jat* III 105)

The Vessas were the trading people In the Buddhist literature their position was next to the Brāhmanas (cf *Aggañña Sutta*, *Dīgha Nikaya* III) They adopted the married state and set on foot various trades The Jātakas contain references to such trading people and trading families (cf *Jat* II 16,, 190)

The Suddas come next to the Vessas They were known in the Buddhist age as slaves as opposed to freemen children born to such slaves were also slaves We hear of them quite occasionally as domestic servants in the houses of the rich (*Jat* (Fausboll) IV 200) According to the *Aggañña Sutta*, those who took to hunting and such debasing pursuits were known as Suddas (the lowest grade of folk) *Vāsabhakhattiya* a daughter of a slave girl who became the consort of the King of Kosala, was degraded, together with her son Vidūdabha because they were of servile rank (*Jāt* I 27 and see also *Jāt* IV 91) It is interesting to note that the name of a noble family should not be given to a slave girl s bastard child It happened that a chaplain fell in love with a slave girl who conceived and enquired of him as to the name by which the child should be called The chaplain replied thus My dear here is a tree called *Uddāla*, and you may name the child as *Uddālaka* It can never be that the name of a noble family should be given to a bastard child of a slave girl (*Jat* IV p 188)

Besides these four classes there were lower *vannas* such as *candalas pukkusas venas, nesādas rathakaras* potters, weavers, leather workers barbers matmakers fishermen drummers (*bherivādaka kula Jat* I 140) conchblowers (*sankhadhamakakula Jāt* I 147) ploughmen or cultivators (*Jat* I 168) greengrocers carters water-carriers field-labourers (*Jāt* III 107) etc It is true that

the *venas* the *nesādas* and the *rathakāras* were undoubtedly aboriginal tribesmen who were hereditary craftsmen So also in the case of matmakers, potters, weavers leather-workers and water-carriers who adopted low occupations from generation to generation undoubtedly all these were *hīnajātīya* or low caste people In the Buddhist age a barber was rewarded by the King with a village (*Jāt* I, 30) A true believing barber was allowed to listen to the Master s discourse and enter the *Sangha* It appears from this that there was no bar for a man of lower *varna* to come to listen to the Buddha s *dhamma* (*Jat* II 4)

Mention is made of a *candala* village which was inhabited by low-caste *candalas* only (*Jat* IV 124) There was a belief in Buddha s time that the *candalas* used to bring bad luck to thoso who saw them (*Jat* IV, 235) The *candalas* had their own manner of speech and their own language There was a *candāla* village outside Ujjenī (*Jāt* IV, 244) The *candālas* were not admitted into the University of Taxila Two *candāla* brothers went to study at Taxila, posing as Brahmins but when they were found out they were expelled (*Jāt* IV 244) The *candālas* were so much hated by the Brahmins that some among them on account of having tasted the food of a *candāla* were put out of caste (*Jāt* IV 235) A *candāla* is described as having been able to secure as he wished, the beautiful lady *Ditthamangalikā* daughter of a prosperous merchant The lady was kept in the *candala* settlement outside the city without transgressing in any way the rules of caste A son of this beautiful lady, when he was seven or eight years old learned the three Vedas and at sixteen practised charities to the Brahmins (*Jāt* IV 235) There is an instance where we find how a wise and learned *candala* was badly treated by a *Brāhmana* (*Jat* III, 153)

A young Brahmin learnt a charm from a low caste *candāla* When once asked by the King as to the name of the teacher from whom he had learnt it he felt shame to say that he had learnt it from a low-caste *candala* and spoke falsely before the King Instantly the charm was gone The Brahmin spoke to the King the truth Hearing this the King thought within himself When one has a treasure so priceless what has birth to do with it?'

According to the Buddha people belonging to high or low caste could attain arahatship There are instances in the Pāli literature

where we find that a ploughman or a cultivator attained arahatship (*Jāt* I, 168) a fisherman's son was admitted into the order and he afterwards won the glory of arahatship (*Jat* I, 105) A careful study of the *Theragātha* and its commentary will convince one of the fact that people belonging to different castes, from the highest aristocracy to the lowest scavenger lived together in fraternal affection and equanimity and won the highest bliss (*vide* my *History of Pali Literature* pp 500 foll) Any person belonging to the lower castes, as for example *candala* was not eligible for kingship A *candāla* simply because he was a *candala* was not made a king It was distinctly stated that had he been of a higher caste he would have been made a king (*Jāt* III 18)

At the time of the Buddha we meet with several instances where marriage took place among the candidates of equal rank A gentleman of a country near Sāvatthi asked in marriage for his son a young Savatthian girl of equal rank (*Jāt* I 124) A Brahmin was married to a bride of his own rank (*Jat* I, 292) The daughter of a lay sister at Sāvatthi was married to a husband of the same caste (*Jat* I 294) A Sudda had a beautiful daughter when she grew up she was married into a family 'as good as her own (*Jat* II 158) A Brahmin householder of Benares had a son and a daughter when the son grew up his father brought a wife home for him from a family of equal rank (*Jat* III 108) There is an example of *asavarna* marriage (marriage outside *varna* or caste) in the case of the daughter of the chief garland maker of Sāvatthi, named Mallikā marrying Pasenadi the King of Kosala (*Jāt* III 244)

Gahapati, or householder may be found among the classes already mentioned In the Pāli literature the word *Kutumbika* occurs (*Jāt* I 105 *Jat* II, 266) which means a landowner (and a country squire) It may refer to a landowner belonging to any caste, but in the case of Brāhmanas the term *Brahmanagahapatika* , or 'Brahmin householders occurs in several places in Pāli literature for example *Amaccapi Brāhmanagahapatika pi* ' in *Jāt* I p 506 (Fausboll)

CHAPTER IV

ARIYASACCAS

(*Four Noble Truths*)

In the Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda doctrines the *Ariyasaccas* or Four Noble Truths are regarded as the quintessence of Buddhism as propounded by the Master himself It is categorically asserted in the *Petakopadesa* [1] that all that was uttered by the Buddha from the day of his enlightenment to that of his great decease all that he propounded in the form of a *sutta* or a *geyya* or a *veyyākarana* or a *gatha* or an *udāna* all fall within the scope of the Four Noble Truths

The Sutta which embodies them in their authoritative form is known as the *Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta* This Sutta is entertained by tradition as *Pathama Dhammadesanā* or the very first public statement of Buddha s position as a teacher and thinker There is little doubt that the text of this discourse is highly important in the history of Buddhism as a definite formulation of Buddha s doctrine from the orthodox point of view The *Ariyasaccas* as generally interpreted consist of the following four items of truth (1) *Dukkha* commonly translated as suffering (2) *Dukkha-samudaya* commonly translated as origin of suffering (3) *Dukkhanirodha* cessation of suffering and (4) *Dukkhanirodhagāminī-patipada* the path leading to the cessation of suffering Birth decay, death sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair are mentioned as common instances of suffering as generally understood in the world in which we live Union with persons or things a person does not like or separation from persons or things a person likes is said to be suffering from the mental point of view To put it in another form suffering is a painful feeling which arises from getting what one does not desire to get and not getting what one desires to get [2] in short from disappointment The entire position taken

---

[1] *Na kinci Buddhānam bhagavantānam* [illegible] *dhammadesanāya* [illegible] *Dhammacakkam* [illegible] *buddhā tassa sabbe sutta ariyasaccānam* [illegible] *Petakopadesa* Chap I

[2] In the texts the negative statement alone is considered to be sufficient

up in respect of the first item is reduced to this "*Samkhittena pañcupadanakkhandha dukkhā*", 'the five aggregates of attachment constitute suffering

In the traditional exposition each of the terms birth, death and the rest, is carefully defined Birth is defined as a particular biological process of development of an individual in a certain species of living beings Decay is defined as a biological process of infirmity along with the maturity attained by an individual in a particular form of birth Death is defined as a tragic biological end of an individual in life, resulting from the arrest of vital functions Sorrow is defined as a mental process of grieving due to the sense of a great loss either of kinsmen or of wealth or of health or of character or of a cherished belief Lamentation is defined as a verbal expression of sorrow felt in the heart Pain is defined as bodily uneasiness or discomfort Misery is nothing but a mental uneasiness or disagreeable feeling Despair consists in utter dejection of spirit resulting from the sense of great loss beyond recovery By association is meant contact coming together union and mixing with Further explanation follows which tends to show that birth or decay or death is not in itself suffering Suffering arises from a sense of disappointment A person for instance wishes may it be that I shall not be subject to the contingency of birth, but the contingency actually arises in spite of his wishes to the contrary Thus the question of suffering is inwardly bound up with men s wish or desire in regard to certain things All such things in connection with which his wish or desire comes into play are summed up by the five aggregates of attachment

Thus from the consideration of the first item of truth one is led to the second concerning the origin of suffering

The origin of suffering lies in *Tanhā* defined as craving which is potent for rebirth accompanied by lust and self-indulgence seeking satisfaction now here and now there There are three kinds of craving (1) the craving for pleasures of the senses (2) the craving for becoming and (3) the craving for not-becoming

From the consideration of the second item one is left to consider the third concerning the cessation of suffering The cessation of suffering consists in utter fading away and attenuation of that very craving *Nirodha* is cessation without any possibility of rebirth

Craving in its varying forms and various aspects arises in connection with the senses and their respective objects Where the senses external and internal do not come into relation with their objects craving finds no outlet for self-expression *Nirodha* is therefore that state of the self in which consciousness transcends the sphere of senses and their objects

If the cessation of suffering is a truth beyond dispute further question arises what is the Path leading to the cessation of suffering? This path is called the Noble Eightfold Path It consists in right view, right resolve, right speech right action right livelihood right effort right mindfulness and right concentration The right view is defined as knowledge in respect of the four items of truth The right resolve is a resolve to renounce to get rid of hatred and harming The right speech consists in abstinence from lying slandering, use of harsh language and vain talks The right action consists in abstinence from taking life stealing and immoral sexual indulgence The right livelihood consists in following a proper means of existence The right effort is an honest and earnest effort made to check the rise of immoral states that have not yet arisen, to put a stop to the immoral states that have arisen to produce the moral states that have not as yet arisen and to preserve and strengthen the moral states that have already arisen The right mindfulness consists in the practice of the four-fold prescribed mode of *satipatthāna* And the right concentration consists in the successful practice of the prescribed mode of *jhāna*

The formulation of the four truths proceeded on the basis of the doctrine of *Paticcasamuppada* accounting for the origin and cessation of the entire mass of ill The four truths as formulated in the *Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta* represent a definite procedure or schema of thought This procedure was not, of course peculiar to Buddhism A similar procedure was equally followed in other branche of knowledge e g the Sānkhya system of Philosophy the science of medicine and the science of wealth It is not difficult to see ' says Kern, ' that these four *satyas* are nothing else but the four cardinal articles of Indian medical science applied to the spiritual healing of mankind, exactly as in the *Yoga* doctrine '[1]

[1] Kern *Manual of Indian Buddhism* pp 46—47 quotes *Yogasūtra* II 15 Comm *yathā cikitsā-Śāstram catur vyūha ... ro o rogah tur ār ya n bhai*

The term *dukkha'* is taken in Buddhism in a most comprehensive sense so as to include in it danger disease, waste and all that constitutes the basis or cause of suffering In the terminology of one of the earlier thinkers of Buddha s time *sukha* (pleasure) and ***dukkha*** (pain) were conceived as two distinct principles, one of attraction integration or concord and the other of repulsion disintegration or discord Considered in this light ***sukha*** was taken to be the principle of harmony and ***dukkha***, that of discord In the medical texts *roga* or disease which is just an instance of ***dukkha*** is defined as that condition of the self the physical self when the different organs do not function together in harmony and which are attended with a sense of uneasiness And ***arogya*** or health, the opposite of disease is defined as that condition of the self when all the organs function together in harmony and are attended with a sense of ease Thus the problem of ***dukkha*** is essentially rooted in the feeling of discord or disparity Birth decay, or death is not in itself ***dukkha*** or suffering These are only a few contingencies in human experience which upset the expectations of men From the point of view of mind, ***dukkha*** is just a *vedanā* or feeling which is felt by the mind either in respect of the body or in respect of itself and as a feeling it is conditioned by certain circumstances In the absence of these circumstances there is no possibility of its occurrence Whether a person is affected by ***dukkha*** or not depends on the view he takes of things If the course of common reality be that being once in life one can not escape either decay or death and if the process of decay sets in or death actually takes place there is no reason why that person should be subject to ***dukkha*** by trying to undo what cannot be undone Thus ***dukkha*** is based upon misconstruction of the ***dhammata*** or law of things or the way of happening in life If the order of things cannot be changed, two courses are open to individuals to escape from ***dukkha*** (1) to view and accept the order as it is and (2) to enquire if there is any state of ***citta*** or consciousness, on attaining to which an individual is no longer affected by the vicissitudes of life

The Buddhist answer to this enquiry is that there is such a state of consciousness In this state consciousness becomes unrelated with

sajj i ... am ... dun ... sa ... ram ... ... yūnam eva tadyathā ... sa ... ārah sam ... aranetur ... mukho ... ... opāve ... ti

anything which is mundane or mental To reach this state is to be out of touch with the object of every description *Jhana* or ***samādhi*** is the tried mode of reaching that state of consciousness in this present conscious experience

Jhana or ***samādhi*** is the main point in the Noble Eightfold Path, the remaining seven points being directly or indirectly connected with the last point The right view and the right resolve representing as they do the first two points are nothing but rightly focussing the attention and rightly directing the course of the will The right speech, the right action and the right livelihood taken together are the three points that are concerned with the means of purifying one's conduct thereby removing obstacles in the path to ***samadhi*** The right effort signifies the means of consciously determining the character of the motive in practising ***jhana*** or ***samādhi*** The right mindfulness represents the tried means of inducing the ***jhānik*** mood and cultivating mental awareness of all experiences that occur in the course of meditation A great stress is laid in Buddhism on the perfection of the method of attaining to that free and pure state of consciousness

It will be noted that ***dukkha*** is nowhere postulated as a permanent feature of reality It is admitted and entertained only as a possible contingency in life as it is generally lived ***Nirodha*** representing as it does the free and pure state of consciousness is posited as the ultimate nature of reality The procedure of thought wich has been followed does not admit of the consideration of the question whether Buddhism is pessimism or optimism Among all the Buddhist sects or schools the Kukkulikas are said to have taken up a position leading to a pessimistic construction of existence (***sabbe samkhāra kukkulā***)[1] But this was not universally accepted by the Buddhists

[1] *Points of Controversy Prefatory notes* p xlii

CHAPTER V

ARIYA ATTHANGIKA MAGGA

(*The Noble Eightfold Path*)

We have seen that in the architectonic of Buddhist thought as represented by the noble truths, the fourth item is the Path leading to the cessation of suffering This path is called the Noble Eightfold Path — the *Ariya Atthangika Magga* This is otherwise called *Majjhimā patipad*ā or the Middle Path The Asokan expression majham patipādeyamā ti (S R E) that we will fulfil the mean enables us to understand that the term *majjhimā patipadā* rendered Middle Path', is rather a misleading coinage All that king Asoka wanted his officials to do was to fulfil the *majjha* or mean — to realise the ideal of a *via media* In the expression *Majjhima-patipadā*, on the other hand *majjhima* or middle stands as an adjective qualifying *patipadā* or path To explain it in the light of Asoka s phrase the Pāli expression must be taken to mean that it is a definite course of thought or of conduct by which the ideal of *Majjha* may be realised Some such thought developed also in the political thought of Ancient India According to the earlier opinion the kings were to carry on their administration on a strict principle, being relentless in method (*ati-tīksna*) According to the later and more rational opinion, the kings were to follow a principle of polity which is neither too strict nor too lenient (*nātitīksna natimrdu*) In other words the political wisdom according to the later opinion lay in striking the golden mean between the two extremes It may now be taken for granted that in many of the Pāli passages the term met with is not *majjhimā* but *majjha* and that wherever the term *majjha* is introduced it is introduced as a golden mean between two extremes (*dve antā*) In all these references one may note that *Paticcasamuppāda* is mentioned as a formula of thought by which the desired mean can really be fulfilled Asoka in his Separate Rock Edict (Dhauli) says 'Well propounded is the principle thus — If any person suffers from arrest or restraint which

eventually ends in imprisonment [1] many other persons become thereby deeply aggrieved There you must aim at this namely that you will fulfil the mean You are not to proceed under these (immoral) dispositions envy distemper cruelty impatience want of application laziness and lethargy

The *majjha* aimed at by Asoka is a mean between these two extremes of which one is represented by rashness (*āsulopa*) and the other by laziness (*ālasiya*) By *Majjhimā-paṭipadā majjha* or mean in the *Dhammacakkapavattana-sutta* is sought to be avoided or evaded in so far as the verbal expression goes the two extremes being (1) the method of attaining salvation by thoughtless indulgence in the affairs of lust (*kāmesu kāmasukhallikānuyoga*), and (2) the method of attaining salvation by the rigorous practice of self-mortification (*attakilamathānuyoga*) In the doctrine of the Middle Path the futility of these two methods is sought to be brought out in many ways and in many places The thoughtless indulgence in the affairs of lust is the way of the common run of men and the rigorous practice of self-mortification is the traditional way of the extreme type of ascetics

The first kind of life is illustrated in the *Ariyapariyesana Sutta* [2] by the life lived by the Bodhisatta as prince Siddhārtha The second kind of life is exemplified in the *Mahāsīhanāda Sutta* [3] by the life lived by the same Bodhisatta as an *Acelaka* or *Ājīvika* after he had renounced the world

So far as English phraseology goes golden mean is just the expression which verbally fits in with the Buddhist *Majjha* or *Madhya* The Golden mean is the middle course between the two extremes — a wise moderation But the golden mean which the Buddhist has aimed at is reachable by various degrees of approach from two sides That is to say the conception and formulation of the golden mean in Buddhism became possible after many centuries

[1] Dr S Dutt placing undue reliance on Mr Basu's interpretation of *bandhanantikā* seeks to maintain that Asoka was against persons leaving the world and becoming monks But the word *bandhanantikā* definitely means something which ends in *bandhana* and not that which leads to it Cf *Dukkhā* [illegible] *maraṇantikā* suffering which culminates in death (*Dīgha* II *ābādha māraṇantika* p 128)

[2] *Majjhima Nikāya* I p 160

[3] *Majjhima Nikāya* I pp 68 foll

of evolution of religious life and thought of India without reference to which its historical significance cannot be truly realised A suggestion has been recently made that it is not so much by avoidance or evasion of the two extremes as by bringing out in essence the significance of each trodden or proposed path that the Buddhist ideal of the golden mean may be fulfilled The underlying spirit of this doctrine of the golden mean' in Buddhism has been well expressed in the following verse of the *Dhammapada* (verse 141) —

> *'Na naggacariyā na jatā na pankā*
> *nanāsaka thandilasāyika va*
> *rajo ca jallam ukkutikappadhanam*
> *sodhenti maccam avitinnakankham*

> , Not by nakedness not by plaited hair not by dust not by fasting, not by lying on the bare ground not by rubbing with dust and not by sitting motionless one can purify oneself, if one is not free from desire

This 'golden mean served as the guiding principle to the whole of the Vinaya discipline according to which, the life of the Buddhist Holy Order was to be moulded The desired effect sought to be produced was to shift the emphasis from things external to the purity internal [1] The Noble Eightfold Path was propounded as a well-tested method of attaining the internal purity of the self

The first two factors in this method are *sammaditthi* and *sammāsamkappa* commonly rendered right view and right resolve *Sammāditthi* as used in this context is otherwise called *aviparītadassanā* or a view or belief which is not contrary to truth Here *sammāditthi* conveys the sense of faith or belief rather than that of any metaphysical view or theory It is precisely in some such sense that the Jains use the term *sammādamsana* As explained in the Pāli *Sāleyyakasutta* [2] (p 288) *sammāditthi* suggests an article of faith which is contrary to that which was inculcated by Ajitakesakambali and his followers This article of faith consists in the acceptance of the belief that there is such a thing as gift that there is such a thing as sacrifice, that there is such a thing as oblation to fire that there are such things as results immediate and remote of deeds, well-done and ill-done, this world the other world mother

---

[1] *Majjhima Nikāya* Vol I p 39 *sināto antarena sinānena*

[2] *Majjhima Nikāya* Vol I pp 285 foll

father adventitious birth, and such well gifted and well accomplished religious teachers who truly declare the nature of this and the other world after having realised it through their higher perception or intuition [1] and *micchaditthi* suggests an article of faith just contrary to this [2] There cannot be *sammaditthi* or right faith unless there is a clear pre-perception of the moral intellectual or spiritual situation which is going to arise In other words *sammāditthi* is that form of faith which is only a stepping-stone to *paññā* or knowledge It is the faith or conviction acquired by a Buddhist *sotāpanna* or 'stream-attainer who is sure to reach the goal Once you lay hold of the first factor which is *sammaditthi* you are sure to arrive at the last factor namely *sammasamādhi* which is right concentration, the approved means of attaining *visuddhi* or purity, and *vimutti* or emancipation *Sammā-samkappa* or right resolve represents just the will-aspect of the Buddhist faith It consists in right direction of the will towards the goal Some of the earlier Upanisads teach that all that a man earnestly desires to attain comes to the fulfilment from the very *samkalpa* or determination of will (*yam kāmam kamayate so asya samkalpādeva samuttisthati tena sampannah mahīyate*)

The next three factors namely *sammā-vācā* (right speech), *sammā-kammanto* (right work) and *sammā-ājīva* (right livelihood) constitute the well-tried method of the attainment of moral purity (*sīla-visuddhi*) The moral purity is not to be viewed as an end in itself but only a means to an end and the end in view is no other than cultivation of mental purity (*citta visuddhi*) which is attainable by means of the remaining three factors namely *sammā-vāyāma* (right effort) *samma-sati* (right mindfulness), and *sammā samādhi* (right concentration) [3] Conduct or external behaviour is only an outward expression of the moral states (*cetasika dhammā*) [4] which constitute man s internal character Unless that is thoroughly purified by mindfulness meditation, concentration and introspection the attempt will be like preventing the future growth of a tree simply by cutting it down on the surface leaving the roots

[1] *Majjhima Nikāya* Vol I p 288

[2] *Ibid* p 287

[3] *Majjhima* Vol I p 146

[4] *Visuddhimagga* Vol I p 7 *Patisambhidāmagga* I p 44

intact[1] The moral character which is the very flower of human estate must grow if it is to grow at all, of itself from within And the object of the last three factors in the Buddhist Path is permanently to remove those obstacles and those immoral dispositions, on the one hand and to induce or produce those healthy conditions of mind on the other whereby one can really help the spontaneous growth of moral character from within[2]

The consideration of these three factors will be taken up in details in the chapter on *Jhāna* Here we may point out that the Noble Eight-fold Path leaves out two important factors without which the Buddhist system of thought is incomplete In the *Rathavinita* and a few other *suttas* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* it is mentioned that *sila-visuddhi* in itself is useless if it does not lead to something still better that *citta visuddhi* in itself is useless if it does not lead to something better than it and that *ñana-visuddhi* or purity of knowledge in itself is useless if it does not lead to the ultimate end which consists in the attainment of *vimutti* or emancipation We cannot say precisely in what state of Buddhist thought the number of factors in the Path was fixed as eight There is an enumeration e g in the *Sangiti suttanta* which expressly recognises two additional factors namely *samma-ñana* or right knowledge and *samma-vimutti* or right emancipation[3]

---

[1] *Dhammapada* verse 335 *yathāpi mule anupaddave dalhe chinno pi rukkho punar eva ruhati*

[2] *Digha* III p 221 *anuppannānam pāpakānam akusalānam dhammānam anuppadāya ... uppannānam pāpakānam akusalānam dhammānam pahānāya ... anuppannānam kusalānam dhammānam uppādāya ... uppannānam kusalānam dhammānam thitiya asammosāya bhiyyobhāvāya vepullāya bhāvanāya pāripuriyā*

[3] *Dīgha* Vol III p 271

CHAPTER VI

JHĀNA

(*Meditation*)

"In the words *jhana* contemplation, and *samadhi* rapt concentration says Mrs Rhys Davids[1] are contained the expression of that self-training in selective intensive work of mind in which the Indian sought by changing the usual conditions and procedure in cognition to induce consciousness of a higher or different power *Jhāna* or ecstatic musing was a very longstanding practice similar to the Yoga of the Hindus and the four *jhanas* consist in the process of systematic elimination of factors in consciousness

Buddhaghosa evidently following the authority of the *Dhammasanganī* speaks of five *jhanas* a somewhat later classification which had developed out of the four *jhanas* described and differentiated in the Sutta portion of the Pāli canon The four or five *jhānas* constitute a category by themselves and in many of the *Suttas* they are relegated to the *rūpāvacara* sphere of consciousness In the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* the five *jhanas* are mentioned as equally holding good in the case of the *lokuttara* state of consciousness It is not however clearly stated anywhere in this authoritative Buddhist Manual why they should not also hold good in the case of the *kamāvacara* or the *arūpavacara* sphere The discrimination made in favour of two out of the four *avacaras* would seem to have been an arbitrary procedure of thought The four or five *jhānas* considered apart from the four *avacaras* signify nothing else than four or five stages in a process of *jhana* from its inception to its termination in the attainment of a state of trance (*samāpatti*) Altogether five factors are involved in each process of *jhana* at its inception namely *vitakka vicāra pīti sukha* and *ekaggatā* The first factor *vitakka* is rendered initial application as it directs its concomitant properties towards the object *Vicara* is rendered sustained application

---

[1] *Buddhist Psychology* 2nd Ed pp 94—95

because it 'permits the continued exercise of the thought on the object' *Pīti* is that factor in consciousness which creates an interest in the same object *Sukha* the fourth factor is nothing but pleasurable easeful and happy feeling which results from the attainment of the condition sought for and *ekaggatā* is the element of individualisation which develops from time to time into *samādhi* Thus *ekaggata* remains a common factor throughout the *jhānic* process It is indeed the most essential condition of the entire process of *jhana* The so-called four or five *jhanas* signify no more than the four or five successive stages of the *jhānic* thought

In the first stage of meditation five elements viz *vitakka*[1] *vicara* *pīti*[2], *sukha* and *ekaggata* are present In the second stage the first two are eliminated In the third the first three are eliminated leaving *sukha* and *ekaggata* In the fourth *sukha* is replaced by *upekkha* and there remain two elements viz *upekkha* and *ekaggatā* There is not much difference between these two sets of meditation In the second stage of the first set of meditations *vitakka* and *vicara* disappear simultaneously but in the second set of meditations they disappear one after another thus giving opportunity for another stage The third fourth and fifth stages of the second set of meditations correspond to the second third and fourth stages of the first set

As regards right concentration (*sammā samādhi*) Buddhaghosa describes it as concentration on good thought It is so called because in *samādhi* all thoughts are simultaneously and rightly centred on a particular subject Its characteristic is absence of distraction its immediate cause is firmness and its remote cause is happiness *Samādhi* has been variously divided according to its predominant characteristics Regarding the purity and impurity of *samadhi* Buddhaghosa points out that the condition which leads to its excellence causes its purity while that which causes deterioration

---

[1] *Vitakka* is the directing of concomitant properties toward an object and *vicāra* is the continued exercise of the mind on that object and as regards *ekaggatā* the mental property by which the object of consciousness is necessarily regarded as an individual occupying a definite position in space or time or in both and is termed an individuality of an object *Vide* [illegible] Shwe Zan Aung's *Compendium of Philosophy* pp [illegible] f

[2] Signifies an interest in an object

brings about its impurity Buddhaghosa says that there are two ways of practising *samadhi* viz *lokiya* and *lokuttara* The practice of *lokuttara samadhi* is but the culture of wisdom while the practice of *lokiya samadhi* consists in purifying one s own conduct establishing oneself in the purified conduct destroying the ten obstacles adopting the practice of one of the forty *kammaṭṭhānas* avoiding living in a manner unsuitable to the practice of meditation destroying the minor impediments and applying oneself to the perfect practice of meditation It really means concentrative meditation It is of an intensive attention i e of concentration establishing of consciousness exclusively and voluntarily on any single object [1]

It would seem that Buddhaghosa takes *samadhi* almost in the same sense as *jhāna* in contravention of the usual sense in which the term *samadhi* is employed and understood in Indian literature We have suggested above that *samadhi* or *samapatti* marks the close of a period in the continued process of *jhana* The states of *samadhi* or trance are to be conceived as so many halting stations on the road At each of these states there is a ... to stop, so to speak, of the thought process in *jhāna* The state is reached by two stages namely *upacara* or access and *appana* or consummation A new period begins when another *ārammana* or object engages the attention and mind is concentrated thereon After having gone through five stages there occurs another state of trance and so on The Pāli texts usually speak of nine *samāpattis* or states of *samadhi* the first eight of which are said to have been reached or experienced by the Indian teachers already before the advent of the Buddha while the ninth state called *saññāvedayitanirodha* was reached for the first time by the Buddha himself [2] The period extending from the eighth to the ninth is broadly subdivided into eight stages or eight degrees of *lokuttara jhāna* As expressly mentioned in the *Abhidhammatthasangaha* the thought-process in *jhana* proceeds in the same manner as in the earlier stages According to Buddhist treatment of the subject the *Kamāvacara* represents the non-*jhanic* or non-reflective sphere of thought It denotes a level of consciousness when the subject is in touch with external objects as cognised

---

[1] *Majjhima* III pp 71-78

[2] *Majjhima Nikāya* Vol I p 206

through the senses the objects themselves being regarded as things belonging to an external order governed by its own *dhamma* (law of happening) In other words the nine *samapattis* are attainable in three higher spheres of thought and three higher levels of consciousness namely the *rūpāvacara* the *arūpa acara* and the *lokuttara* the first four in the *rūpavacara* the next four in the *arūpā acara* and the last in the *lokuttara* These spheres of thought and levels of consciousness also constitute so many successive planes of direct experience Thus the intensification of the degrees of concentration of mind is determined by the nature of the *ārammana* or object The further the mind travels away from the objects of sense the percepts and images the deeper is the concentration The *jhana* thus considered is to be viewed as a passage of thought from object to object until a complete isolation from all objects bodily or mental is accomplished The idea of isolation is expressed by such terms as *viveka* (aloofness) or *vivitta* (aloof) It is also a process of self-purification through a gradual elimination of all disturbing and distressing factors in consciousness The nature of the ninth *samā-patti* called *saññavedayitanirodha* in which the feeling of *vimutti* or the realisation of *nibbāna* is possible is hinted at in the *Cullavedalla Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* (Vol I) In this *Sutta* we are told that the state of trance is reached by the cessation first of *vacī-sankhāra* (vocal functions) next of *kayasankhara* (vital functions) and lastly of *cittasankhāra* (mental functions) And inversely when the normal state of the individual is restored there begins first the mental function next the vital function and lastly the vocal function We are further told that when consciousness enters into this state of trance the individual becomes outwardly as good as dead *usma* or warmth remaining as the only palpable indication that the person is alive Certain visions dawn on consciousness as it passes from state to state from level to level and from plane to plane The true vision is that which arouses the prospect of the goal Certain *iddhis* or supernormal faculties also develop in the same process, but one is to beware of them so that they may not stand in the way Buddhaghosa in his *Visuddhimagga* (pp 168—169) speaks of five *jhanas* With regard to *jhanas* five kinds of *vasī* or mastery are obtained (1) the power of reflecting on the *jhanic* thought (*avajjanavasī*) (2) the power of attainment (*samapajjana-*

vasī) (3) the power of resolution (*adhitthanavasī*) (4) the power of exertion (*vutthānavasī*) and (5) the power of concentration (*pacca vekkhana vasī*). A bhikkhu who has avoided the five pleasures of the senses, is said to have passed the range of vision of the evil one who divested of pleasures and wrong state of mind abides in the first ecstasy, the second ecstacy, the fourth ecstacy, the plane of infinity of consciousness, the plane of naught, the plane of neither perception nor non-perception and the plane where feeling and perception cease.[1] In the *Jhana-samyutta* of the *Samyutta Nikaya*[2] the Buddha points out that there are four classes of people who practise *jhana* (1) one who practises meditation is skilled in concentration but is not skilled in the attainment thereof (2) one who practises meditation is skilled in the attainment of concentration itself (3) one who practises meditation is neither skilled in concentration nor skilled in the attainment thereof and (4) one who practises meditation is skilled both in concentration and the fruits thereof. Of the four, the last one is the best and most pre-eminent.

Here we have to consider also the subject of *satipatthana* which constitutes a grammar of *jhana*. *Sammasati* means right recollection. It also means wakefulness of mind, alertness, self-consciousness. It is mindfulness with regard to body,[3] sensation, mind and phenomenon (*dhamma*). The *Satipatthāna Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikaya* contains the Buddha's advice to the monks to practise mindfulness. It is by the fourfold mastering of mindfulness that one can pass beyond sorrow and lamentation and ills of body and mind and obtain the right path.[4]

---

[1] Cf. *Nivāpa Sutta*, *Majjhima Nikāya*, I, pp. 151–160.
[2] *Samyutta Nikāya*, III, p. [illegible].
[3] *Kāyagatāsati Sutta* (*Majjhima Nikāya*, III, pp. [illegible]).
[4] *Majjhima Nikāya*, I, pp. [illegible]; cf. *Cakkavatti-sīhanāda Suttanta*, *Dīgha*, III, pp. [illegible]; *Anguttara Nikāya*, [illegible], Vol. IV, pp. 150 foll.

CHAPTER VII

PUGGALA

(*Individuality and Personality*)

Puggala, attā, satta and *jīva* are the four terms which occur in the Buddhist texts in connection with all discussions relating to individual, individuality, personality, self and soul.[1] As a biological term, *puggala* is nowhere used to deny the existence of an individual being or a living person. When it is said, e.g., in the *Dhammapada* that the self is the lord of the self (*attā hi attano nātho*)[2] or in the *Mahaparinibbana Suttanta* 'Be yourself your own lamp and your own refuge' (*atta-dīpa viharatha atta-sarana*),[3] by the word *atta* or self is meant the living individual to whom the advice is given. Here the particular individual or individuals are beings that exist in fact, grow in time and ultimately die. Certain philosophical enquiries arise in connection with these individuals, the living souls (to use an English phraseology). The question arises how are the individuals known to us? How can they be represented in knowledge? And how far can the ultimate reality be realized in thought or experience?

These points are popularly discussed in the *Milindapañha* in the very opening discussion. We are told that the individuals are signified by some names arbitrarily fixed, Nāgasena, Sūrasena or Vīrasena. The personal name is only a conventional device to denote an individual and to distinguish him from other individuals. It has no connotation beyond this symbolism. The name in itself is insufficient as a means of forming a complete idea of the individual concerned. When we proceed to represent the individual in knowledge, we only lay hold of certain percepts or concepts denoting the various aspects or factors. But the individual concerned is not

---

[1] *Kathāvatthu*, I, p. 26.
[2] Verse 160.
[3] *Dīgha*, II, p. 100.

involved in the representation itself. The feeling, however, is that the percepts or concepts with which the representation is concerned, cannot be formed without some sort of reference to an individual and the reference is a whole reference, not mechanically divisible into parts. There never arises a position in thought where the equation of the whole with the sum total of parts is justified, nor can at the same time the notion of the whole be possible apart from the parts.

The point at issue is illustrated by the simile of a chariot and its parts. Chariot is a name or designation in common use by which a whole thing in its organic unity and working order is meant. But when one tries to lay hold on it, one lays one's finger only on parts. Even by mechanically summing up the parts, the idea of the whole which is sought to be conveyed cannot be produced. The ideas of the parts arise with reference to an object which is not actually involved in them. The object of reference is not a permanent thing, while the concepts that are formed in thought with reference to it remain as abstract materials of thought (*appamana paññattis*).[1] As to a living human being who too is not a permanent object in nature or in experience, the concepts or general ideas that may be formed in thought with reference to him are the five aggregates, *rūpa, vedanā, saññā* and the rest. The individuals come and go, but the concepts as concepts remain as permanent materials of thought and as the possible modes of representation in thought or means of description in words. These are *appamana paññattis* or concepts as abstract materials of thought.

This elucidation of the Buddhist view of *Puggala* in the *Milinda* is but an elaboration of the teaching of a *gātha* ascribed in the *Samyutta Nikāya* to *Bhikkhunī* Vajirā.[2] The discussion in the *Milinda* presupposes an earlier controversy on this subject (*Puggalakatha*) in the *Kathavatthu*, a book of controversies which tradition entertains as a compilation of Asokan age. The controversy starts on the question of validity of a certain proposition (*patiñña*) which is to be regarded as a correct verbal representation of the view point or doctrine (*laddhi*) of a certain Buddhist school of thinkers called

---

[1] *Puggala Paññatti Comm.*, J.P.T.S., pp. 171 foll.
[2] *Yathā hi aṅgasambhārā*, etc., Vol. I (*Bhikkhunīvagga*).

Puggalavādins in Buddhaghosa's commentary As Dr Barua points out there is a good deal of misrepresentation of the opponent's view point the main intention of the orthodox defender of the good faith being only to establish a verbal interpretation of a verbal proposition with a view to taking a dialectical advantage over it [1] There is an attempt throughout to show that the Puggalavādin's position is not different from that of outsiders who are avowedly the upholders of the doctrine of soul as a permanent entity But reading between the lines it is easy to make out clearly that wherever the suggestion is made that the import of the point under discussion is identical with the view point of the outsiders it is at once repudiated The controversy is important as bringing out the exact Buddhist position with regard to the problem of *Puggala* or Individuality The position upheld on the whole by the unknown Buddhist opponent may be reduced to this, that to talk about the five aggregates as *Vijjamāna paññattis* is to return no answer to the problem of individuality If five aggregates be real as concepts or means of representation they convey no meaning without reference to individuals in existence Without such a reference the aggregates, posited as reals are mere abstractions

The problem of individuality is bound up with the problem of the ego percipient or internal knower (*vedagū*) The problem of the ego has been discussed in the *Milinda* The position of those who uphold the doctrine of the ego is stated thus that there is an internal knower in every living self or individual who is the real seer of all things seen the hearer of all things heard and so on (*vedagū upalabbhati*) [2] The organs of sense stand as so many avenues through which the ego gathers experience of the external world According to the Buddhist view as set forth in the *Milinda* the ego thus conceived does not satisfactorily account for the mental phenomena If the tongue the organ of taste had not its local independence the sweetness or bitterness of a thing could also have been tasted and discriminated even when the thing swallowed passes beyond the range of the tongue The same holds true also in the case of other organs of sense A scientific explanation of all

---

[1] *Prolegomena to a History of Buddhist Philosophy* p 34

[2] *Milindapanho* Trenckner p 54

mental phenomena does not lie in a single cause such as the ego but in a conjuncture of causal circumstances (*paccaya-sāmaggī*). It is true no doubt that whenever any mental operation takes place, it takes place as a unit with regard to time depending on the same subjective basis and stimulated by the same object (*ekavatthukā ekārammaṇā*).[1] The Buddhist formula is: there must be the eye, the organ of sight, there must be a visible matter (*rūpa*) present within the range of vision (*āpāthagata*) and there must be auditory cognition, the combination of the three making the sense-impact (*phassa*) possible; this impact is a condition precedent of sensation. In searching for the ego which is believed to be the *sāra* or substratum of individuality we stumble only upon certain sensations or perceptions or cognitions or volitions or predispositions but never the substratum itself. The usual description of ego is that it is permanent, invariable, eternal, firmly established like a wooden pillar of a city-gate and the same for ever (*nicco dhuvo sassato esikaṭṭhāyiṭṭhito, sassati samaṁ thassati*).[2] But one will always appeal in vain to experience to furnish apodeictic certainty for the existence of such an entity as within the living self. The Buddhist psychologist introduces mind as an internal sense or *sensus communis* (*manindriya*) but he is far from positing it as an ego. But he admits the possibility of a state of consciousness when it has been free from all obsessions of objects. In this state consciousness can in no way be characterised (*ananuvejjo*).[3] What happens to this consciousness after the death of the individual is not at all clear. But the Buddhist freely entertains the popular belief in rebirth. How can the process of rebirth be explained without the reality of the ego or soul is the question. This too has been discussed in the *Milinda*, as also in the *Kathāvatthu*. It goes without saying that the Buddhist thinker repudiates the notion of the passing of the ego from an embodiment to an embodiment. His is not a theory of transmigration of soul. The course of transmigration has been described in the *Bṛhat-Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* by the simile of a grass-leech (*tṛṇajalaukā*) which passes from the end of one blade of grass to that of another. The *Bhela Saṁhitā* has sought to

[1] *Dhammapada commentary*, Vol. I, pt. I, p. 2.
[2] *Dīgha*, I, p. 14; *M. N.* I, p. 136.
[3] *M. N.* I, 140.

show that the analogy is untenable (*na yuktam*) With the Buddhist rebirth is to be conceived as *kammasantati* or the continuity of an impulse The point is illustrated by the instance of a set of lamps each with fitness for ignition and placed in a row and in close touch with each other one of which being lighted the others are lighted Here there is no passing of any spirit from one lamp to another The lamp which is first lighted serves only to help in producing the necessary condition for ignition in the remaining lamps

CHAPTER VIII

PATICCA-SAMUPPĀDA

(*Dependent Origination*)

Paticcasamuppada is claimed to be the fundamental concept of Buddhism as a system of thought. The term has been variously interpreted both by the Buddhist scholiasts themselves and modern scholars without sufficiently bringing out its philosophical import and implications. They have sought to explain it either as a doctrine of causation or that of dependent origination or that of becoming by the way of a cause by the usual and oft-recurring formula of twelve *Nidanas*. There are traditional expositions of the twelve *Nidanas* in many of the canonical texts and later commentaries both in Pāli and Sanskrit. There are several inscriptions referring to *Paticcasamuppāda* as the fundamental doctrine of Buddhism. It is difficult to realise the metaphysical significance of this doctrine. It behoves us therefore to see if the discussion of the problem of *Paticcasamuppāda* can be introduced in a new way.

The formula of twelve *Nidānas* must be taken to be a later appendage to an earlier formulation of the doctrine. The formula came in only by way of an illustration of the original formulation which has been clearly set forth in the three Bodhi *suttas* in the *Udāna*. Similar formulations are also met with in some of the suttas of the *Majjhima Nikāya*.[1] There is at least one *sutta*[2] in the *Majjhima Nikāya* in which the original formulation is presented without the illustrative formula of twelve *Nidānas*. The Bodhi suttas in the *Udāna* clearly indicate three successive stages in the formulation of the doctrine: (1) *anuloma* or order of becoming, (2) *patiloma* or order of cessation (*nirodha*), (3) *anuloma patiloma* being a synthesis of the order of becoming and the order of cessation. There were certain Buddhist schools, including the *Sarvāstivādins* in whose opinion the *anuloma* order only is valid. It is therefore not sur-

[1] *Majjhima Nikāya*, I, pp. 262 foll.

[2] *Cūḷasakuludāyi sutta*, *Majjhima Nikāya*, II, p. 32.

prising at all that in the texts only the *anuloma* order is recognised and explained We cannot agree with Dr P C Bagchi that the non-recognition of the *patiloma* order on the part of the Sarvastivadins disproves the earlier date of formulation of the doctrine in the *patiloma* order as well [1] Buddhaghosa was well aware of this viewpoint and he has sought to repudiate it in his *Visuddhimagga* [2] Buddhaghosa says that according to some the doctrine of *Paticcasamuppāda* deals with the problem of becoming (*uppāda*) only' That is not proper Why? (1) Because there is no text to support it (2) because it militates against what is stated in the *suttas* (3) because it cannot be deduced from a grammatical construction of the term itself [3] All that the Pāli scholiast seeks to establish is that the statement of the doctrine is not complete if the aspect of *nirodha* is precluded and that throughout the Pāli texts we meet with both the aspects of the doctrine

The doctrine of *Paticcasamuppāda* has been introduced in some of the typical *suttas* as *majjha* or the way of the golden mean It is by this *majjha* that the founder of the system is said to have established his position avoiding the two extremes of *atthi* and *natthi* [4] theism and atheism eternalism and annihilationism fatalism or determinism [5] and the theory of chance [6] or fortuitous origination, and of moral freedom [7] and bondage

The doctrine of *Paticcasamuppāda* in its simplest formulation runs as follow — *Imasmim sati idam hoti imass uppadā idam upapajjati imasmim asati idam na hoti imassa nirodha idam nirujjhatīti* [8]

[1] *E I* Vol XI pp 194 ff & 199 ff

[2] Vol II p 518 *Keci pana uppādamattam paticcasamuppādo ti vadanti tam na yujjati*

[3] *Visuddhimagga* II pp 518—519 *Keci pana paticcasamuppāda* [illegible] *kappitu pakatip* [illegible] *uppādo paticcasamuppādo ti evam uppādamattam paticcasamuppado ti* [illegible] *Kasmā* (1) *Suttābhāvato* (2) *suttavirodhato* (3) [illegible] (4) [illegible] *bhedato ca*

[4] *Samyutta N* II pp 17 & 90 *S N* III p 135

[5] *Sabbam pubbe katahetu A N* I p 173

[6] *Sabbam ahetu appaccayā adhiccasamuppannā A N* III p 440

[7] *Sukhadukkham sayamkatam sukhadukkham paramkatam Petakopadesa* Ch I *Pr Buddhistic Indian Philosophy* pp 406—407

[8] *Majjhima Nikāya* II p 32

This having been that comes to be from the arising of this that arises This having not been, that does not come to be from the cessation of this that ceases to be This in illustrated by the oft-recurring formula of twelve *Nidanas* The Buddhist scholiasts have sought to explain the earlier form so as to make it fit in with the formula of twelve *Nidanas* But the question remains — What is the correct interpretation of the *Paticcasamuppāda* as stated in the above form apart from any reference to the formula of twelve *Nidānas*? Does it imply a mere order of sequence of facts as experienced and noted or a fully developed doctrine of causation? So far as we can make out it is rather a natural basis of the doctrine of causation than the doctrine of causation itself The sequence is nothing but an order in which snapshots of things are taken and noted down with the result that the facts as registered come as disconnected data of experience In introducing a logical interconnection between these facts we have recourse to a law of causation The idea of sequence implies an antecedent (*purejāta*) and a consequent (*pacchājāta*) Explained in the light of causation the antecedent is not a single cause but a combination of certain circumstances with causal efficiency to account for the occurrence of the consequent The causal circumstances when analysed and classified and differentiated yield the conception of a number of *paccayas* or rational modes of representing the nature of *dhammatā* in thought As for sequence as expressing the nature of reality as commonly experienced it is not something which mind imagines but something which forces itself on mind This led some of the Buddhist schools to speak of *Paticcasamuppada* as *asankhatadhatu* or uncreated element [1] The textual authority cited in support of this view is as follows — Whether monks there be an arising of *Tathāgatas* or whether there be no such arising in each this nature of things just stands this causal status this causal orderliness, the relatedness of this to that Concerning that the *Tathāgata* is fully enlightened that he fully understands Fully enlightened, fully understanding he declares it teaches it reveals it sets it forth manifests explains, makes it plain saying Behold! conditioned by this, that comes to be' [2]

---

[1] *Kathāvatthu* Vol II p 319

[2] *The Book of the Kindred Sayings* Vol II p [illegible]1

The *Abhidhammattha-sangaha* rightly points out that the *Paticca-samuppada* mode (*naya*) differs from the *Patthana* mode in this respect that it is just concerned with sequence in the procession of events or phenomena as observed (*tabbhāva tabbhavī*) while the *Patthāna* mode is concerned with the differentiation of the various *paccayas* or causal factors involved in the causal relation The difference in view may perhaps be better expressed if we say that the *Paticcasamuppada* mode is concerned with a dynamic view of the *Patthana* mode with a static view of nature or reality Turning to the oft-recurring formula of twelve *Nidānas* we find that *avijjā* is generally allowed to head the list The term is generally rendered as ignorance, which does not, however, bring out the philosophical connotation of the term As regards *avijjā* Buddhaghosa has raised and discussed a very interesting point Can *avijjā* as conceived in Buddhism be treated as an uncaused root-principle like the *mūla-prakrti* of the Sānkhya philosophy? The Pāli scholiast maintains no doubt in agreement with some of the earlier exponents of Buddhism, that *avijja* is not conceived on the lines of Sāṅkhya *mūlaprakrti* With the Buddhists *avijjā* is not uncaused Buddhaghosa has however to admit that there are some texts in which *avijjā* may appear to be similar to the *mūlaprakrti* of the Sānkhya system He refers in connection to a text in the *Anguttara Nikāya* in which the Buddha is represented as saying 'the beginning of *avijjā* does not appear so that one might say that ignorance did not exist formerly but it has since come into being However it is apparent that *avijjā* is conditioned The beginning of *bhavatanhā* does not appear so that one might say that *bhavatanha* did not exist formerly but it has since come to being However it is apparent that *bhavatanhā* is conditioned Thus the Buddha sought to account for the cosmic process of the cycle of births and deaths by mentioning two specific conditions of actions

The Pāli scholiasts ought to have considered along with it the other statement which occurs in the *Samyutta Nikaya* (*Anamata samyutta*) In the *Samyutta* text the Buddha is represented as saying Incalculable (endless) is the process of *samsara*, the beginning of beings running through the course of *samsāra* being cloaked by *avijja* and tied to *bhavatanhā* does not appear" [1]

[1] *Samyutta Nikāya* II p 186

All this amounts to saying that endless is the cosmic process, the course of *samsāra* so that its beginning ever remains unknown and unknowable Thus the entire history of *samsāra* may never be unveiled But the *dhammatā* of the process is definitely known The *dhammatā* in question consists in the related character of reality in its process of becoming If one knows this *dhammatā*, it is immaterial whether one has the historical knowledge of the entire course of *samsāra* or not At whichever point one takes up its consideration it involves two factors, namely, *avijjā* and *bhavatanha* that are sufficient to account for the happy or unhappy states of beings *Avijja* is that factor which keeps the nature of *dhammatā* concealed and *bhavatanha* is that factor which constitutes an incessant impulse to becoming All forms of ignorance are expressions of *avijja* and all kinds of desires are various manifestations of *bhavatanhā* It is in this manner that Buddhism meets and answers agnosticism which draws a huge capital out of man s incapability to know the first beginning of the world

It has been well pointed out by Rhys Davids that the doctrine of *Paticcasamuppāda* finds in the *Mahānidāna Suttanta* of the *Dīgha Nikaya* (Vol II pp 55 foll) the fullest exposition accorded to it throughout the *Pitakas* The *Dīghabhanakas* or the reciters of long discourse excluded the first two of the 12 *nidānas* or chapter , viz , *avijja* (ignorance) and *sankhāra* (confections) In the *Paccayakaravibhanga* of the *Abhidhamma Pitaka* the formula is reiterated and analysed with greater variety of presentation But in the *Mahanidāna Suttanta* the doctrinal contents are more fully worked out Although the formula as expounded in this *sutta* ends in the usual way — such is the uprising of the whole body of ill — the burden of the dialogue is in no way directly concerned with ill, pain or sorrow In certain other passages where the *nidāna* chain occurs, *dukkha* occupies the foreground (*Dialogues of the Buddha* II, p 42) *Sankhāra* is Sanskrit *Samskara* which means an aggregation *Avijjā* (ignorance) is the cause of aggregation *Tanha* is also interpreted as thirst craving According to the *Cūlatanha sankhaya Sutta* [1] a bhikkhu wins deliverance by the extirpation of cravings so as to become consummate in perfection in his union with peace and in the higher life and foremost among gods and men Sensation

[1] *Majjhima Nikāya* I 151 foll

is the cause of thirst *Vedanā* means sensation or feeling which is pleasurable or painful *Salayatana* is the six organs and objects of sense, viz , *Rūpa, Vedanā Sañña, Sankhāra* and *Viññāna*

Viññāna is consciousness which, according to the Buddha, runs on and continues without break of identity [1] All sinful acts may be traced to *avijja* or ignorance All wrong states have their origin in ignorance [2] It is clear that from contact arises feeling [3]

According to the Buddha, the only ideal worth striving after, is the ideal of a perfect life in this present existence in saintship and this ideal is to be reached by freedom from desire [4]

In the *Nidāna Samyutta* of the *Samyutta Nikaya* [5] we find that the Buddha explained to the bhikkhus the chain of causation which begins with ignorance and ends with birth old age and death leading to grief lamentation suffering, sorrow and despair In the chain of causation we find that six senses originate from name and form In the *Saḷayatana samyutta* of the *Samyutta Nikāya* [6] the Blessed One speaks of the six senses He points out that the eye and the objects of sight, the ear and the sounds the nose and the sense the tongue and the savours the body and the things tangible the mind and the mind s state are all impermanent ill and void of the self But there is the way of escape from these This is the restraint of desire and lust which are in the eye, etc Where there is no desire there is no ill He further points out that by seeing the six senses as impermanent, as fetters and as *āsavas* ignorance is removed and knowledge arises fetters are abandoned and *asavas* (sins) are uprooted The Buddha characterises the eye and the object of sight the ear and the sounds, etc as transitory According to him passion is a disease and one can abide passionless by not imagining I have an eye etc One should not be enamoured of the object cognisable by the eye etc If one is so then one is called restrained If one is not so then one is said to have lack of restraint [7] We find that from *phassa* or contact *vedanā* or feeling

[1] Cf *Mahātaṇhasankhaya sutta* *M N* I 256 foll
[2] Cf *Opamma Samyutta* *S N* II pp [illegible]62—[illegible]7[illegible]
[3] Cf *Dhātu Samyutta* *S N* II pp 140 foll
[4] *Udāna* chapter I
[5] Pt II pp 1—33
[6] Vol IV pp 201—204
[7] Cf *Saḷāyatana Samyutta* *S N* Vol IV pp 1—204

arises In the *Vedanā samyutta* of the *Samyutta Nikaya*[1] we find that there are three *vedanās* or feelings — Feeling that is pleasant, feeling that is painful, and feeling that is neither pleasant nor painful The lurking tendency to lust for pleasant feeling to repugnance for painful feeling and to ignorance of feeling that is neither pleasant nor painful must be abandoned Pleasant feeling should be regarded as an ill painful feeling as a barb and neutral feeling as impermanent So all these should be abandoned This abandonment in a bhikkhu is called rightly seeing[2]

In the *Paccayakara Vibhanga* various *paccayas* are enumerated and explained after which the *suttanta* portion naturally closes According to this *Vibhanga, avijja* or ignorance means ignorance in suffering in the origin of suffering in the cessation of suffering and in the path leading to the cessation of suffering

As regards confections or conformations we find conformations of merit demerit body mind and speech There is good thought in the domain of sensual pleasure and in the domain of form conducive to charity and virtue The reverse of it is found in *apuññābhisamkhāra*, confections regarding demerit As regards consciousness it is consciousness as regards sight hearing scent tongue body and mind There is name and there is form The name consists of *vedana* (feeling) *saññā* (perception) and *samkhara* (confection) The form consists of the element of four great beings

As regards contact it is contact with regard to eye ear nose tongue body and mind There is sensation due to sight due to hearing due to smelling due to taste due to bodily action and thought There is desire for form sound scent taste touch and *dhamma* or thing There is attachment for sensual pleasure false notion etc *Bhava* or existence is of two kinds — existence as a state of action and existence as a state of origination As regards the existence as a state of action we may speak of the confection of merit and demerit etc and as regards the existence as a state or origination we may speak of the coming into being form formlessness, etc Then as regards birth it means the existence of beings and the origination of *Khandhas* or the constituent elements Then as regards old age and death there is infirmity of beings and the

[1] IV 204 238

[2] Cf *Vedanāsamyutta* S N IV 204—238

ripeness of *indriyas* or senses Regarding death, it is nothing but disappearance of the human beings and the destruction of *khandhas* and life-senses

Name and Form originate from consciousness and from Name originates ignorance From sensation desire, contact, attachment and ignorance originate Name is nothing but an aggregate of sensation, perception and confection Six senses originate from name and form, viz , eye, ear, nose, tongue body and mind

CHAPTER IX

KAMMAVĀDA

(*Doctrine of Kamma*)

The Pāli term denoting the doctrine of *Karma* is *Kammavada* the alternative form of which is *Kiriyāvāda*[1] The doctrine of *Karma* is accepted in all the main systems of Indian philosophy and religion as an article of faith The Buddha is generally credited with the propounding of this doctrine but there is a clear statement in the *Majjhima Nikāya* to show that the doctrine had not originated with the Buddha The statement is to the effect that the doctrine was propounded before the advent of the Buddha by an Indian teacher who was a householder[2]

According to the popular Hindu belief *Karma* is a sum total of man's action in a previous birth determining his future destiny which is unalterable Its effect remains until it is exhausted through suffering or enjoyment This popular notion of *Karma* is exemplified by a birth-story called *Matakabhatta Jātaka*

The two extreme views of thought having a bearing upon the doctrine of *Karma* are stated thus in Buddhism (1) sabbam *pubbe katahetu* all that a being suffers from or experiences is due to the sum total of his deeds in the past (2) *sabbam ahetu appaccavā* all that a being experiences in this life is only a matter of chance

These two extremes are sought to be avoided in Buddhism Jainism, which too claims to be a rightly formulated doctrine of action (*Kiriyā*) is distinguished from fatalism or determinism on the one hand and the doctrine of chance on the other, takes up a position which is not acceptable to the Buddhists Partly determined and partly not determined (*niyatāniyata*) or partly due to external causes and partly due to oneself is taken to be the declared position of Jainism which has been severely criticised in the *Devadaha sutta*[3]

---

[1] *Majjhima Nikāya* I p 483

[2] *Ibid* p 483

[3] *Ibid* Vol II pp 214 foll

Let us see if the Buddhist statement crediting an earlier Indian teacher with the propounding of the doctrine of *Karma* is correct In the *Brhat Āranyaka Upanisad* and in the teachings of Yājñavalkya we meet with a clear formulation of the doctrine of *Karma* and the resemblance between this formulation and that which is met with in the Pāli texts, is so close that one may be perfectly justified in maintaining that the Buddhist doctrine of *Karma* is nothing but a further elucidation of that in the *Upanisad* The *Kammavibhanga suttas* in the *Majjhima Nikāya*[1] are nothing but a later exposition of this doctrine A still later exposition is found in the *Atthasālinī* of Buddhaghosa[2] The doctrine is emphatically formulated in the *Cūlakammavibhanga sutta*[3] in the following words *Kammassakā satta kammadāyāda kammayonī kammabandhū kammapatisaranā Kammam satte vibhajati yadidam hīnappanītatāyāti* Karma is one s own a man is an inheritor of his *karma* one finds one s birth according to his or her *karma* *karma* is one s own kith and *karma* is one s own refuge *karma* divides beings into higher or lower

Thus it may be shown that the earlier trends of thought were recognised and explained also in Buddhism but the question arises if such was precisely the Buddhist conception of *Karma* It is indicated in many of the texts that violence should not be done to the accepted beliefs of the people if these are found to be beneficial to their moral development But the Buddhists approached the problem from a purely mental point of view The Buddhist viewpoint has been characteristically set forth in the *Mahāniddesa* under *Jarā sutta* The *Mahāniddesa* points out[4] that a man need not be afraid of the vast accumulation of *Karma* through a long cycle of births and rebirths For considered from the point of view of mind the whole of such accumulation may be completely undone by a momentary action of mind Mind is in its own place and as such can make and unmake all such accumulations of *Karma*

[1] *Majjhima Nikāya* III pp 03 foll

[2] *Majjhima Nikāya* III p 203

[3] Vol I pp 117 -118

[4] *Jīvitam attabhāvo ca sukhadukkhā ca kevalā ekacittasamāyuttā lahuso vattate khano*

Anidhānagatā bhaggā puñjo natthi anāgate nibbattā ye ca titthanti āragge sāsapūpamā

On the whole Buddhism shifted the emphasis to the action and state of the mind Accordingly *Karma* came to be defined as *Cetanā* or volition A person can not be held morally or legally responsible for any action of his or her if it is not intentional Thus the Buddhist teachers tried to define *Karma* on a rational and practical basis This point of view has, however, been shortly criticised by the *Sūtrakritanga*[1] In the system of the *Abhidhamma* the Buddhist teachers seek to furnish the psychological data of ethics men's conduct or external behaviour being regarded as an outward expression of his internal character The accepted Buddhist idea of the doctrine of *Karma* may be represented by Buddhaghosa's expositions

Buddhaghosa in his *Atthasālinī*[2] defines *Kamma* as volition expressed in action (*Cetanaham bhikkhave kammam vadami*) An action is no action until the will is manifested in conduct *Kamma* means consciousness of good and bad merit and demerit (*Kammam nāma kusalākusala-cetana*)[3] *Kamma* is of four kinds (1) *Ditthadhamma-vedaniya* i e *Kamma* which produces result in this life (2) *Upapaccavedaniya* i e *kamma* which produces result in the next life (3) *Aparāpariyavavedaniya* i e, *karma* which produces result from time to time[4], and (4) *Ahosikamma* i e past *kamma* We have another fourfold division of *kamma* — (1) *Garuka* i e an act be it good or bad which has a serious result (2) *Bahula*, i e excess of either virtue or vice which produces its respective results (3) *Asanna* i e *karma* which is thought of at the time of death and (4) *Katattākamma* i e an act which has been frequently done by one in his life-time and which in the absence of the three previous *kammas* causes rebirth We have still another classification of *kamma* (1) *Janaka* (determining the character of rebirth) (2) *Upatthambhaka*, (sustaining) (3) *Upapilaka* (oppressive) and (4) *Upaghataka* (hurting) These twelve kinds of acts and consequences are manifested in their true aspect in the Buddha's knowledge of the consequences of *karma* Those who are endowed with the spiritual

---

[1] *Jaina Sūtras* Pt II S B E pp 80 foll
Visuddhimagga II p 614
Visuddhimagga II p 601

insight come to know some *kammantara* and *vipakantara* [1] *Kamma* produces consequence, retribution is born of action action is the cause of rebirth in this way the world continues No action passes from the past life to the present nor from the present to the future[2] Regarding the relationship between *kamma* and *vipaka* Buddhaghosa says that there is no *kamma* in *vipāka* and no *vipāka* in *kamma* Each of them by itself is void at the same time there is no *vipaka* Just as there is no fire in the Sun nor in the lense nor in the dried cow-dung and likewise fire is not outside them but comes into existence on account of their requisites in the same way *vipaka* is not seen within the *kamma* nor outside it A *kamma* is void of its *vipāka* which comes through *kamma* *Vipāka* comes into existence on account of *kamma* [3] In the past the *khandhas* which originated as the consequences of action (volition) ceased In this existence other *khandhas* arise out of the consequences of past deeds There is no condition which has come to this existence from the past in this existence the *khandhas* which are originated on account of the consequences of *karma* are destroyed In another existence others will be produced from this existence not a single condition will pass on to the next existence [4] According to the *Atthasālinī* *Karma* is of three kinds *Kayakamma*, *Vacīkamma* and *Manokamma* It is *Cetana* and the states associated with it According to Childers all three originate in *cetanā* He further points out that *karma* under the name of *samkhāra* is one of the links of *Paticcasamuppada* [5] Buddhaghosa divides *kamma* into (1) *Kammasamutthana* (set up by *Karma*) (2) *Kammapaccaya* (caused by *Karma*) (3) *Kammapaccavacittasamutthana* (caused by *Karma* and set up by consciousness) (4) *Kammapaccayaāhāra samutthana* (caused by *Karma* and set up by sustenance) (5) *Kammapaccayautusamutthān* (caused by *Karma* and set up by temperature) *Kamma* is ultimately reduced to the psychological factor of volition Volition is the unique determination of will Will exercise has its power over its co-existent mental properties and

---

[1] *Visuddhimagga* II p 602
[2] *Visuddhimagga* II 603
[3] *Visuddhimagga* II p 603
[4] *Visuddhimagga* II p 603
[5] p 176

physical qualities In fact all our activities in deed, word or thought are due to its influence The doctrine of *Karma* or the efficacy of good or bad works is inseparably bound up with that of renewed existence The world exists through *karma* and people live through *karma* (*kammana vattati loko, kammanā vattati pajā*)

CHAPTER X

DHAMMA

There is no other word or term in Buddhism which is of so frequent occurrence as *dhamma* or its Sanskrit equivalent *dharma*. This term, precisely as in the Vedic texts, is used in both singular and plural forms. *Dhammatā* or *dharmatā* is coined by the Buddhists as a special term to signify the essential nature of things, the normal condition, the usual course.[1] In actual usage, however, the distinction in meaning between *dharma* and *dharmatā* is not strictly maintained. Mrs. Rhys Davids rightly points out that the word *dharma* has in the history of Buddhist thought undergone much elaboration, more so than in Brahmanic. Whether in its singular or plural form, it occurs only ten times in the Three Vedas, it is given no special consideration, historical or other, in a standard work like Oldenberg's *Religion des Veda*.[2]

Childers suggests that the word, in masculine or neuter form, conveys such meaning in English as nature, condition, quality, property, characteristic, function, practice, duty, object, thing, idea, phenomenon, doctrine, law, virtue, piety, justice, the law or truth of Buddha, the Buddhist scriptures, and religion. Similar is indeed the list of meanings suggested by Monier Williams in his Sanskrit-English Dictionary. The Pāli-English Dictionary compiled by Rhys Davids and Stede gives a more methodical treatment of the word, classifying the various meanings in which it is employed in Buddhism. But even here the treatment fails of its purpose inasmuch as it does not set forth the reason why and how the word came to comprehend such a wide range of meaning without any fear of contradiction or inconsistency on the part of those who used it. The *Dhammapada-commentary* suggests that the word *dhamma* has been used in Pāli in one or other or all of these four meanings: (1)

[1] *Dīgha Nikāya*, Vol. II, pp. 12 ff. *Dhammatā esā bhikkhave* ... *ayam ettha dhammatā*.

[2] *Buddhism*, revised edn., p. 62.

guna (quality property characteristic) (2) *desanā* (discourse instruction) (3) *pariyatti* (worded doctrine of Buddha scriptures) and (4) *nissatta-nijjīva-dhammā* (mental states, conditions or phenomena without involving the notion of ego or entity)[1] The utmost that we here have, is no definition but a bare statement or cataloguing of four different meanings in which the word or term has been employed in early Buddhism

Some guidance is given by Mrs Rhys Davids[2] and Professor Stcherbatsky[3] in the matter of understanding and appreciating the Buddhist conception of *dhamma* or *dharma*

The definitions of the term *dhamma* or *dharma* as met with in the Buddhist and Brahmanical works are all one sided not to say farfetched We read for instance in the *Khuddakapatha-commentary* (p 19)

Maggaphalanibbanāni dhammo ti eke bhāvitamaggānam sacchikatanibbānānañ ca apāyesu apatanabhāvena dhāranato paramassa-savidhānato ca maggavirāgā eva imasmim atthe dhammo ti amhakam khanti Aggapasādanasuttañ c ettha sādhakam vuttam h etam yavatā bhikkhave dhammā samkhatā ariyo atthangiko maggo tesam aggam akkhāyati

'According to some authorities *dhamma* means the efforting and fruition stages of the elect culminating in *nibbāna* Our opinion, however is that *dhamma* is that which up-holds (*dhāranato*) in the sense that those who have cultivated the path and realised *nibbana* have no longer the fear of fall into the states of woe and no less in the sense that it provides for the highest kind of solace and ultimately transcends all need of effort The teaching of the *Aggapasādanasutta* proves the truth of this There it is said As many doctrines O Bhikkhus have (so far) been formulated the Noble Eightfold Path appears to be the best of them'

According to Jaimini s *Pūrvamīmāmsāsūtra* (I 1 2) *Codanālaksano rtho dharmah*

Dharma is that which is characterised by an urge into action fulfilling the (desired) object

According to Manu s Code (Ed Jolly p 14)

Vidvadbhih sevitah sadbhih nityam advesarāgibhih

[1] *Dhammapada commentary* Vol I p ..
[2] *Buddhism* First and Revised Editions
[3] *I H Q* Vol X No 4 pp 737 foll

hrdayenābhyanujñato yo dharmas tam nibodhata

Comprehend that (alone) to be *dharma* which is cultivated by the learned the elect the persons who are always free from hatred and passion and which is (at the same time) readily responded to by the heart

According to the consensus of opinion the Brahmanical definition of *dharma* is

Vaidikah pratipādyo rthah dharmah
Vihitakriyayāsadhyo dharmah pumsām guno matah
Pratisiddhakriyasādhyah sa guno dharmah ucyate

'*Dharma* is an end to be attained in conformity with injunctions in the Vedas

Dharma is to be considered a distinctive quality of men to be achieved by means of action (work conduct) as enjoined (in the Vedas)

Referring to Asokan use of the word Mrs Rhys Davids opines The word *dhamma* is not morality as it is unfortunately rendered in the *editio princeps*, nor is it 'law or 'good form Senart s religion' is better but too ambiguous F W Thomas definition based on revelation and custom and a sphere of conduct leading to heaven is a better guide But why the weighty the lofty term for that which ought to be done or not done namely 'conscience is never used by translators is strange Or if not conscience then at least, duty Externally considered, *dharma* is, for India, law for Buddhism worded doctrine As belonging to man's inner world conscience or duty is more fit It is the urge of this sense that makes a man truly 'moral Because of that urge he (Asoka) wards his fellowman in his person and in his interests ' [1]

In Varuna the Vedic sages arrived at the conception of an ordered universe where everything happens according to Law and nothing by the caprice of an arbitrary will And in *rta* they reached the conception of rhythmical evolution or harmonious manifestation of the cosmos Both of these conceptions constituted the historical or philosophical background of the later ideas of *satya* and *dharma* In the *Taittirīya Upanisad*, I I *rta* and *satya* are introduced as two aspects of one and the same idea or reality — *pratyaksa-Brahman Pratyaksam Brahmam vadisyami rtam vadisyāmi satyam vadisyami*

[1] *Buddhism* revised edn p 228

In another passage of the same Upanisad I 9 *rta* and *satya* are mentioned along with *tapa* *dama* and the rest as different items of one and the same system of conduct or duty

Rtam ca svādhyāyapravacane ca Satyam ca svādhyāyapravacane ca Tapas ca svādhyāyapravacane ca

In a valedictory address in the same *Upanisad* I 11 we read

Satyam vada Dharmam cara Svādhyāyān mā pramadah Satyān na pramaditavyam Dharmān na pramaditavyam Kusalān na pramaditavyam

Speak the truth Practise *dharma* Do not neglect the study of the Vedas A right-minded man must not deviate from truth from *dharma* and from good '

Thus in the third passage where the word *rta* does not occur the word *dharma* is substituted for it *dharma* takes the place of *rta* What is the relation either between *rta* and *satya* or between *satya* and *dharma*?

We might suggest that *satya* is that which is in conformity with *rta* [1] and *rta* is that which is in conformity with *satya* and the same as to the relation between *satya* and *dharma* Or we might say that *rta* assumes the name of *satya* when its nature is stated in terms of words, and that of *dharma* when its nature is manifested in the form of practice, duty or conduct From one point of view, the whole programme of duty arises out of the primary idea of *rta* and from another point of view the whole programme of duty is comprehended by *dharma* For the use of *dharma* in the sense of genus and species whole and part, in the same breath we may cite here the Pāli gāthā [2]

Yass ete caturo dhammā vānarinda yathā tava
Saccam dhammo dhitī cāgo dittham so ativattati

He who is armed with these four *dharma* (principles) truth piety forbearance and self-sacrifice overcomes the foe

The relation between *satya* and *dharma* [3] as two aspects of one

---

[1] *Anrta* which is an antithesis to *satya* is that which is not in conformity with *rta*

[2] *Vānarinda Jātaka* (Fausboll No 57) Vol I p 280

[3] For the juxtaposition of the two words *satya* and *dharma* or *dharma* and *satya* Cf *Chāndogya Upanisad* VII 2 1 *dharmam cādharmam ca satyam cānrtam ca sādhu cāsādhu ca hrdyajñam cāhrdyajñam ca*

and the same idea or reality is emphatically brought out in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, I 4 14

Satyam vai tat Tasmat satyam vadantam āhur dharmam vadatīti dharmam vā vadantam satyam vadatītyetaddhyevaitad ubhayam bhavati

Dharma is indeed *satya* Therefore they say that if a man declares *satya* he declares *dharma* and if he declares *dharma* he declares *satya* Thus both are the same

In this text *dharma* stands for 'law principle of justice sphere of conduct in conformity with established custom the disregard of, or departure from which is punishable by law For here we also read

Sa tacchreyorūpam atyasrjata dharmam Tadetat ksatrasya ksatram Yad dharmas tasmād dharmat param nāstyato abalīyam balīyām samāsamsate dharmena yathā rājñai

He created still further the most excellent Law (Dharma) Law is the *ksatra* (power) of the *ksatra*, therefore there is nothing higher than the Law Thenceforth even a weak man rules a stronger with the help of the Law as with the help of a king

The meaning of the all-important dictum *dharmah ksatrasya ksatrah* requires some amount of elaboration Here *ksatra* stands for both the earthly ruler and his divine prototype When they say *dharma* is the *ksatra* of the *ksatra* they mean that *dharma* is the guiding principle of royal administration which is the same as to say the domination by the warrior-power has its justification or fulfilment only in the maintenance of the social order and the administration of justice The king in his person is not above the law It is the law that is above the king

This conception of *dharma* was elaborated in early Buddhism But with the Buddha the Buddhist *dharma* is no mere law but something more than law it is the principle of righteousness in conformity with which a reigning king is to shape his conduct and guide the course of administration

Ko pana bhante rañño rājā ti? Dhammo bhikkhū ti Bhagavā avoca Idha bhikkhave rājā cakkavattī dhammiko dhammarāja dhammam yeva nissāya dhammam sakkaronto dhammam garukaronto dhammam apacayamāno dhammaddhajo dhammaketu dhammadhipateyyo dhammikam rakkhāvaranaguttim samvidahati antojanas-

mim khattiyesu anuyantesu (? *anuvuttesu*) *balakayasmim brahmanagahapatikesu negamajanapadesu samanabrahmanesu migapakkhīsu* [1]

Who is Venerable Sir the king of the king? Dharma O Bhikkhus is the king of the king said the Blessed One Here O Bhikkhus it is depending on *dharma* (the law of truth and righteousness) honouring, respecting and revering it, doing homage to it, hallowing it being himself the standard-bearer of *dharma* the living symbol of *dharma* and acknowledging sovereignty of *dharma* that the king, overlord the virtuous and rightful monarch provides the right watch and rightful protection for his own people for the army, for the nobles for vassals for Brahmins and householders for town and country-dwellers for the *religieux* and for beasts and birds

It is characteristically observed by the translator of the *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta* that the whole passage in the Pāli is a striking outburst on the superiority of right over might [2]

That the above idea of *dharma* recognises the superiority of right over might is beyond all doubt But the principle of righteousness is far more than the mere sense of right or that of duty The above idea of *dharma* implies that there should not be any right or duty which is imposed from outside An element of fatigue dissatisfaction or vexation of spirit is apt to be there when one is to function under such a pressure from without or such an obsession within The idea of *dharma* is such that there should be the fulfilment of the whole duty of a man as man according to law, according to custom according to the sense of right good and happiness but no feeling of tedium or dissatisfaction or vexation of spirit The whole course of human duty to oneself one's people one's fellow-beings and one's fellow-creatures is to flow spontaneously from within out of an inner urge or innate sense without causing vexation or exasperation of spirit It is indeed such an idea of *dharma* as Asoka sought to inculcate in so many of his edicts and inscriptions

Dharma is something to take one's stand on [3] something to

---

[1] *Anguttara* III pp 149–50 cf *Dīgha* III p 61 *Dialogues of the Buddha* pt III p 62 fn 1

[3] Cf Asoka's R E IV *dhammamhi tistamto*

adhere to, to abide by, to act in conformity with [1] in all spheres of existence, action, expression or importance for progressive relation of all desired or desirable ends of life. It carries with it the assumption or intuition or recognition or representation of some sort of an order (*niyamata*), capacity to hold good (*thitata*), explicability in terms of causality (*idapaccayata*) and causal efficiency (*arthakriyākāritā*). It may stand for any order or system, whether of reality or of nature or of society or of morality or of thought or of faith or of spirit. According to Buddhism *dharma* broadly involves the conception of five orders (*niyāmas*): *utu* (caloric, chemical, physical), *bīja* (germinal, genital, biological), *kamma* (functional, socio-moral, legal, ethical), *citta* (mental, psychical, psychological) and *dhamma* or *karana* (logical, dialectical, schematic, metaphysical).[2] The principle, the mode, the method, the facts, the data, the result, in short all that go to constitute an order or system go by or come under the name of *dharma*.

It is interesting to note that in Indian literature the word *dharma* is conveniently employed together not only with *satya* (Pāli *sacca*) but also with such words as *artha* (Pāli *attha*), *nyāya* (Pāli *naya*), *yukti* (Pāli *yutti*), *tarka* (Pāli *takka*), *sīla*, *sama*, *vinaya*, *patipada* or the like, evidently to represent two different aspects of one and the same idea, fact, doctrine or system. In each instance the two s are so juxtaposed as to suggest that one stands as a complement to the other. *Dhammañ ca atthañ ca anusāsi* (administered justice and advantage) is an oft-recurring phrase in the Jātakas.[3] *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Mokṣa* constitute the four ends of the Brahmanical system. As for the correlation between *dharma* and *yukti* (which is but another term for *nyāya* and *tarka*) it is definitely enjoined in Raghunandana's *Prāyaścittatattva* (*Bṛhaspativacana* quoted) that *dharma* declines if it is judged without *yukti* (reasoning).[4] Here reasoning is no more than a reasonable mode of exposition or interpretation which is in conformity with the authority whether that authority is the *Veda* or the *Tripiṭaka*. In other words

---

[1] Cf. Aśoka's R.E. VII: *dhammānupatipati anupatipajamtu*; R.E. X: *dhammavatam anuvidhiyatu*.

[2] *Sumangala Vilāsinī*, II, 432.

[3] *Jātaka*, Vol. II, 105: *Atthadhammānusāsaka*.

[4] *Yuktihīna vicāre tu dharmahāniḥ prajāyate*.

yukti is just a ratiocinative means establishing a harmonious link with that which is accepted as the final authority [1] According to the traditional *yukti* of India *dharma* is not only that which is in accordance with the established custom or the accepted authority but also that which is lawful, judicious and equitable *Rajje patitthaya dhammena samena rajjam kāresi* ' Having been established in sovereignty he governed his kingdom according to law and equity The same remarks hold true of the Pāli idiom *dhamma-cariyā sama-cariyā* the practice of *dhamma* the practice of *sama* *dhamma* and *sama* being in conformity harmony or consistency with each other

With regard to the correspondence between *dharma* and *sīla* we may read in Asoka s R E IV *dhammamhi sīlamhi tistamto dhammam anusāsisanti* taking their stand on *dharma* (principle of righteousness law piety and morality) and *sīla* (moral conduct) they will administer *dharma* impart instructions on it Here *dharma* and *sīla* are to stand in conformity with each other To say *dhammamhi sīlamhi tistamto* is the same as to say *dhamme thito* cf *Makhadevasutta* (*Majjhima Nikaya* II p 74) *Makhādevo nama dhammiko dhammaraja dhamme thito dhammam carati brahmanagahapatikesu nigamesu c eva jānapadesu ca uposathañ ca upavasati* This goes to show that *dharma* itself is the basis or foundation of both *dharma* and *sīla* that are to be fulfilled in practice

Similarly when Buddha s system as a whole is intended to be meant the term *dharma* or *sāsana* is used and where it is intended to be represented in its two aspects theoretical and practical we have the use of two terms *dharma* and *vinaya* (Doctrine and Discipline) instead of one — the *dharma* *Imasmim dhamma vinaye* is the same expression as *imasmim dhamme* or *imasmim sasane* As for the intended conformity or harmony between the two aspects of Buddha s system as formulated it is definitely enjoined in the *Dīgha Nikāya* II pp 123 foll [2] that in establishing a right interpretation of Buddha s word one must test the soundness of the doctrine aspect in the light of the discipline and the soundness of the discipline aspect in the light of the doctrine An interpretation failing to show that one is in conformity with the other must

[1] Cf *Netti pakarana* *yuttihāra* pp 21 foll

[2] Cf *Netti pakarana* p 21

Tāni padabyañjanāni sutte otārayitabbāni vinaye sandassayitabbāni dhammatāyam upanikkhipitabbāni Dhammatayam Paticcasamuppāde

be rejected as unacceptable In the case of each Indian system the two aspects are taken together to be its proper representation So one reads in the *Mahāniddesa*, p 287 '*parassa ve dhammam anānujānan ti parassa dhammam diṭṭhim paṭipadam maggam anānujānanto* According to this text *dhamma* which is the same as *diṭṭhi* (doctrinal viewpoint) and *paṭipada* which is the same as *magga* (practical viewpoint) are just two sides of one and the same *dhamma*

The *dharma* is 'that which is intuited or directly sensed or perceived It is that which is conceived in thought represented to oneself, formulated for the satisfaction of the thinker himself It is also that which is proclaimed publicly stated promulgated in a particular form or fashion or formulated in the interest of those for whom it is intended That which is intuited or directly sensed or perceived is either of the nature of reality, or of the material world, or of the mental world or of the physical world or of the moral world or of the intellectual world or of the spiritual world That which is conceived in thought represented to oneself, formulated for the satisfaction of the thinker himself is the form of solution of the problem which engaged the thinker or contemplative And that which is proclaimed publicly stated, etc is the nature of criticism of the solution of the problem or problems offered by others as well as of the new direction to all human pursuits The *dharma* of the second kind is to be in conformity with that of the first and that of the third is to be in conformity with that of the second and ultimately with that of the first Thus indeed one may appreciate the interpretation of the Mahāyāna doctrine of Trikāya 'the three modes of cognition, the successive stages of manifestation or the three forms of expression of the nature of *dharma* — the *dharmata* We read in the *Samyutta Nikaya* Vol II p 25

Uppāda va Tathāgatanam anuppādā va Tathagatānam thita va sā dhatu dhammaṭhitatā dhammaniyamata idappaccayata Tam Tathāgato abhisambujjhati abhisameti abhisambujjhitvā abhisametvā ācikkhati deseti paññapeti paṭṭhapeti vivarati vibhajati uttanīkaroti passathāti caha

Mrs Rhys Davids renders this Whether there be an arising of Tathāgatas or whether there be no such arising this nature of things just stands this causal status, this causal orderliness the relatedness of this to that Concerning that the Tathāgata is fully

enlightened, that he fully understands Fully enlightened fully understanding he declares it teaches it reveals it sets it forth, manifests explains makes it plain, saying 'Behold [1]

Thitā va sā dhātu The element which is in itself in its own inherent right independently of all thought or interpretation This is what is called ***dharmata tathatā sūnyata*** or ***pauranadharmasthititā*** (as in the ***Lankāvatāra Sūtra***) [2]

According to Mrs Rhys Davids this involves the conception of a world-cosmos wherein cause and effect grinds its way, a cosmodicy rather than a theodicy an infinite mechanism started none knows when, or how or to what end [3]

On the same ground some of the early Buddhist schools of thought (the Pubbaseliya and the Mahisāsaka according to Buddhaghosa) declared ***paticcasamuppāda*** to be ***asankhata*** uncreated by thought, the uncompounded while the exponent of Theravāda objected to the treatment of ***paticcasamuppada*** as ***asankhata Nibbana*** is ***asankhata*** with the Theravāda as with the rest of the schools Thus to regard ***paticcasamuppāda*** as ***asankhata*** is to admit two ***asankhatas*** which one could not reasonably do The decision arrived at in the Mahāyāna system is that ***Paticcasamuppada*** and ***Nibbana*** are essentially one and the same reality But is ***paticcasamuppāda*** dependent origination when taken in the sense of ***paurāna-dharmasthitatā***? The term ***pratītyasamutpada*** is employed evidently in this very sense in the opening verse of Nāgārjuna's ***Madhyamika-karika***

Dr E J Thomas observes Nāgārjuna begins by discussing the nature of causation as expressed in the theory of dependent origination (***pratītyasamutpāda***) of the causal formula Dependent origination is said to be characterised by being (1) without cessation (2) without origination (3) without cutting off (4) not eternal (5) not one (6) not differentiated (7) without coming, (8) without going Its interpretation as a series of causes and effects is entirely rejected [4]

With Dr Barua 'Nāgārjuna's ***pratītyasamutpada*** is the element

---

[1] *The Book of the Kindred Sayings* II p 21

[2] *Lankāvatāra Sūtra* edited by Nanjio

[3] *Buddhism* by Mrs Rhys Davids revised ed p 57

[4] History of Buddhist Thought p 210

of reality [1] which is in itself in its own inherent right independently of all thought or interpretation It is just a 'novelty as intuited at each moment either in immediate continuity or at uniform intervals (*anantara samanantara*), that is to say a *khana-paccuppanna dhamma* The novelties are introduced as causally induced factors or even as links in a chain of dependent origination It is thus in the sequence of novelties as noted that lies the ground of the theory of causation The novelty is one thing the sequence another The sequence from the viewpoint of the observer is one thing the causal succession of antecedents and consequents from the viewpoint of the thinker — another Upon the whole the element of reality is the ultimate point of reference of each thought without differentiation or characterisation

The *dharmakaya* is to Theravāda and generally to Hīnayāna the body of doctrine, the doctrine taught by the Buddha We read in the *Milindapañha*, p 73

Dhammakayena pana kho mahārаja sakkā Bhagavа nidassetum dhammo hi mahаrāja Bhagavatā desito

It is possible O king to manifest the Master by the body of the doctrine The doctrine is taught O king by the Master

The *Dharmakāya* is to Mahāyāna the *dharmata* the *tathata* the *sūnyatā* the *paurānadharmasthititā* i e the element of reality in itself In other words this *dharma* or *dharmakāya* is the most essential point in all that is taught by the Buddha Accordingly we read in the *Samyutta nikāya* Vol II p 267, Vol V, p 407

te suttanta Tathagata-bhasita gambhīrā gambhīrattha lokuttara suññatapatisamyutta Those discourses that are uttered by the Tathāgata, are profound deep in meaning and concerned with *suññata* '

Suññata is just another term for *dhammata, tathatā, dhammathititā*

The *dharma* which is to be behind, before and all along thought, action or expression is significantly characterised as *purāna* (the most ancient) *sassata* or *sanatana* (eternal) The discovery of the nature of *dharma* understood in this sense is compared by the

[1] Cf *I H Q* Vol X No 4 p 758 where Prof Stcherbatsky observes the *dharmas* are not things but elements of things That the conception of *dharma* is the basic conception of Buddhism is most clearly and pregnantly expressed by the Buddhists themselves in their old *Credo* — *ye dharmā hetuprabhavah*

Buddha to the discovery of an old buried and forgotten city So we read in the Pāli *Nagara sutta* (*Samyutta Nikāya* II 105—106)

Seyyathāpi bhikkhave puriso araññe pavane caramāno passeyya purānam maggam purānañjasam pubbakehi manussehi anuyātam || so tam anugaccheyya tam anugacchanto passeyya purānam nagaram purānam rajadhanim pubbakehi manussehi ajjhavuttham

Just as if Brethren, a man faring through the forest through the great wood should see an ancient path an ancient road traversed by men of former days And he should go along it and going along it he should see an ancient city an ancient prince s domain wherein dwelt men of former days

Next in the *Dhammapada* Yamakavagga, Verse 5

Na hi verena verani sammantīdha kudācanam
Averena ca sammanti esa dhammo sanantano

Hatred does not cease by hatred Enmity ceases by amity This is the good old rule

Thirdly, in Asoka s M R E (Siddāpur) *Esa porānā pakiti dīghāvuse ca esa, hevam esa kataviye*

Such is the most ancient nature that which is of long standing thus indeed (in conformity with that) this should be done '

H esa pi antevāsīsu yatharaham pavatitaviye yarisā porānā pakiti, yathāraham yatha ivam arokam siyā (Yerragudi)

The same should also be propounded as far as possible to the resident pupils according to the good old rule so that this (noble tradition) will remain unimpaired [1]

And fourthly in the *Bhagavadgītā* XIV V 27

Sasvatasya ca dharmasya sukhasyaikāntikasya ca '

The Pāli expression corresponding to Asoka s *porānā pakiti* is *porāniyā-pakati* The *pakati* or *pakiti* (Sk *prakrti*) is no other than another term for *dharma* The *Sona-Nanda-Jātaka* (Fausboll No 532) which embodies a teaching almost literally similar to that in Asoka s Edicts contains among others the following two *gathas* setting forth the ancient or eternal nature of *dharma*

Kulavamsam mahārāja porānam parihāpayam
Adhammacārī jetthesu nirayam so upapajjati
Ye ca dhammassa kusalā porānassa disampati
Carittena ca sampanna na te gacchanti duggatim

[1] The text read and translated by B M Barua in *I H Q* Vol VII pp 116 120

According to the first *gāthā* the *adhammacarī* is one who abandons one's respectful duty to one's elder brothers and others in accordance with the time-honoured tradition of household life

According to the second *gāthā,* the virtuous man is he who effectually conforms to the ancient tradition — the established custom

The gloss adds that here *dhamma* is the *paveṇi-dhamma* the *dharma* which has held good by continued tradition — the precedent

In dealing with the seven essential conditions of welfare of a nation (or of an order or institution) the Buddha definitely lays down

Yāvakīvañ ca appaññattam na paññāpessanti, paññattam na samucchindissanti yatha paññatte porāṇe dhamme vattissanti vuddhi yeva pāṭikankha no parihānī ti (*Mahāparinibbāna suttanta Dīgha* II)

So long the members of a nation (so of an order or institution) will not introduce that which is not established according to custom, will not destroy that which is established according to custom and will abide by the good old rule so long they may be expected to prosper and not to decline

In explaining *porāne vajji-dhamme* in this text Buddhaghosa speaks of a *paveṇi potthaka* (Book of Precedents) among the Vrjis from which guidance was to be taken in deciding all cases (Vide B C Law's *Some Kṣatriya Tribes of Ancient India* p 103 Rhys Davids *Buddhist India* p 22)

Thus it may be shown that *purāna* or *sanātana* is that which has held good for a long time that which has been adhered through many ages that which has therefore become a normal state of things a normal course of life The normal implies a norm (that which ought to be done or not done), as well as a normal state of the body mind or morale of a person which enables him to respond to the norm and to abide by it

The normal carries with the idea of universal, that which is or may be normally expected of all under a similar set of circumstances

Sabbeh'eva piyehi manāpehi nānabhāvo vinābhavo aññathabhavo tam kut ettha labbha? Yan tam jātam bhūtam sankhatam palokadhammam tam pana nupalujjati, n etam thānam vijjati [1]

[1] *Dīgha Nikāya* Vol II p 158

. The separation departure from, the otherness of existing relation with all who are dear and beloved (is a normal way of happening), how can it then be possible to obtain that which is born has come to-be, is created and of a nature to disappear will not disappear? There is no ground for such an expectation

That which is the most ancient in time is the most immediate in experience [1] It is something which is proved and therefore approved by the wise and each right minded individual is normally expected to respond to it There is no sphere or existence of activity without *dharma* Birth (*jatidhammo*) decay (*jara-dhammo*), and the rest are phenomena that normally occur in the natural order and there are persons or beings who are subject to them Eating sleeping procreating etc are phenomena that normally occur in the order of life There are *kula-dharma jñatidharma mitradharma rājadharma strīdharma purusadharma*, and the rest each being normal expression of human nature in the shape of duty in respect of the family the kinsmen friendship kingship and the like in the social order So on and so forth

But to be in *dharma* is to be in one s own element What one s own element is depends on one s own feeling experience, or understanding There being certain hindrances or obstacles in the way of one s being in one s own element there being certain other conditions helpful to one s being in one s own element there being the possibility of removing those obstacles and inducing favourable conditions a system of training normally involves or comes to prevail in the sphere of education or a system of practice in the sphere of religion To be in one s own element in the ultimate sense is to get beyond the known world of cause and effect *nirvāna* or *moksa* is that highest state in men s religious experience in which alone it is possible to be in one s element in the ultimate sense *Nirvana* or *vimoksa* itself is a *dharma* in so far as it is an object of attainment through a life of effort

In between that which lies behind or lies ahead is the life of effort or pursuit which too is *dharma* To direct or regulate it there is either a system of society or a system of education or a system

---

[1] Prhadvaisnavatosani *Puranas ca pūr* [illegible] *vartamāno* [illegible] Srimadbhāgavata 10 14 23 Cf Bhagavatacandrika *Puranah purāpi nava eh*

of study, or a system of conduct, or a system of mind, or a system of thought, or a system of faith and worship. It is not only the system as a whole but each part of it goes by the name of *dharma*. For instance, Buddhism as a system of religious thought is called *dharma* or *saddharma*, and each of the thirty-seven main points or terms belonging to that system is also called a *dharma* (*sattatiṃsa bodhipakkhika dhamma*).

The *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, which is a Buddhist manual of psychological ethics, gives an exposition of *dhammas* classified as moral (*kusala*), immoral (*akusala*) and *avyākata* (indeterminate). These *dhammas* constitute the mental basis of character which finds its expression in conduct or action. Buddhaghosa takes them to mean those mental states which bear their own intrinsic nature (*sabhāva*).[1] Professor Stcherbatsky has discussed at length precisely in which sense these *dhammas* are regarded as *nissattanijjīva*, the intended distinction being between *nairātmya* (the theory of no soul) and *nairatma* (the theory of non-soul).[2] According to the opening verse of the *Dhammapada*, mind and all things mental are *dharmas*.[3]

The *Pātimokkha*, which is a Buddhist code of monastic discipline, contains various rules of conduct, each of which is called a *dhamma*: *parājikā dhammā*, *saṅghādisesā dhammā*, *aniyatā dhammā*, etc.

In the *Cūla-Sakuludāyi-Sutta* (*Majjhima Nikāya* II, p. 32) the term *dhamma* stands for the sequence of facts as experienced or the law of causation or way of happening by a way of cause as formulated:

Dhammaṃ te desessāmi — Imasmiṃ sati idaṃ hoti, imass' uppādā idaṃ uppajjati, etc.

Just as, on the one hand, *dharma* stands for the entire system of sequence or the chain of dependent origination, so, on the other hand, it stands for each single factor or link which is accordingly called a *sahetu dhamma*, *paṭiccasamuppanna dhamma*.

Similarly, it may be shown that *dhamma* stands not only for the entire system of faith, thought or doctrine but for every part or argument or point of it.

---

[1] *Atthasālinī*, p. [illegible]: *[illegible] dhammānaṃ [illegible] sāmaññaṃ vā lakkhaṇa[illegible]*

[2] I.H.Q., Vol. X, No. 4, p. 745.

[3] *Dhammapada*, verses I, pp. [illegible]—23, 35—3[illegible].

An attempt has recently been made to prove that the term *dharma* is so devised as to comprehend real realised and *reality* actual, actualised and *actuality*, phenomenon phenomenal and *phenomenality* matter material and *materiality* mind, mental and *mentality*, cause caused and *causality* law legal and *legality* thought, thinking and *thinkability* and the like, in short the entire universe of reality and appearance truth and opinion thought and expression principle and action in and through which all things and all individuals may realise their being feel their existence rise into recognition, move into action or proceed to perfection That is to say, *dharma* is not only that which was is or shall be in itself in its inherent right or in its nature or characteristic form but that which comes to happen or prevail on account of its inherent force or intrinsic merit or value

CHAPTER XI

NIBBĀNA

To contemplate the *dhamma* (doctrine) as propounded and promulgated by the Buddha is to contemplate *nibbana* while to contemplate the *dhamma* as propounded and promulgated by Asoka is to contemplate *svaga* (*svarga*) rather *vipula svaga* (unmeasured heavenly joy)[1] *Nirvana* is the *non plus ultra* of the *dhamma* expounded by the Buddha, the *summum bonum* (*sabbadhammānam uttamatthena varam*) of Buddhism[2] the ultimate of all that a Buddha taught or would teach Thus Buddhism is in essence a proclamation of the truth of *nirvāna* a clear statement of the truth about *nirvana* a search for *nirvāna* (*nibbana pariyesana*) and a tried path leading to *nirvāna* (*nibbānagāminī patipada*)[3] The *Netti pakarana* which, as a Pāli work of exegesis and analysis, is allowed by tradition to rank in both antiquity and authority with the very oldest of the Buddhist canonical texts declares to the same effect —

Svākkhāto Bhagavatā dhammo sanditthiko akaliko ehipassiko opanayiko paccattam veditabbo viññūhi yad idam madanimmadano pipāsa-vinayo ālayasamugghāto vattupacchedo suññato atidullabho tanhakkhayo virago nirodho nibbānam[4]

Well expounded by the Master is the doctrine which bears the desired fruit here and now, which has Come and See for its motto, which assuredly leads to the goal the truth whereof is to be experienced by the wise, each individually for himself namely the one which consists essentially in subduing the haughty spirit, the perfect control of thirst the upsetting of the very storage of creative energy, the arrest of the course of *samsara* as regards the fate of an

---

[1] M R E all copies

[2] *Khuddakapāṭha Commentary*, p 123

[3] *Khuddakapatha*, *Ratana Sutta*, V 12 *dhammavaram adesayi nibbanagāmim paramam hitāya*

[4] *Netti* p 57

individual the rare attainment of the state of the void the waning out of desire the dispassionate state, the cessation of all sense of discordance the *nibbāna*

To the very same effect the Buddha is represented in the *Ariya-pariyesana-sutta* as saying —

Nibbanam pariyesamāno ajātam anuttaram yogakkhemam nibbānam ajjhagamam ajaram abyadhim amatam asokam asankiliṭṭham Adhigato kho me ayam dhammo gambhīro duddaso duranubodho santo panīto atakkāvacaro nipuno pandita-vedanīyo [1]

In seeking for salvation I reached in experience the *nibbāna* which is unborn unrivalled secure from attachment undecaying unailing undying unlamenting and unstained This condition is indeed reached by me which is deep, difficult to see difficult to understand, tranquil excellent beyond the reach of mere logic, subtle and to be realized only by the wise (each individually for himself)

The *Vevacana-hara* of the *Netti* which had served as a literary model for the Pāli lexicon *Abhidhānappadīpikā* catalogues various words or terms uncritically called synonyms that bring out different aspects of *nirvana* as conceived and described in early Buddhism The *Netti-commentary* explains these terms as follows —

Nirvana is called *asankhata* (uncompounded absolute) because it is not accounted for by any known causal factor (*na kenaci paccayena sankhatam*) *ananta* (endless infinite) because it does not come to an end or knows no extermination (*n atthi etassa anto vinaso*), *anāsava* (stainless) because the influxes of sin have no hold on it (*āsavānam anārammanato*) *sacca* (true real) because it is not of a nature to be other than what it is (*aviparītasabhāvattā*) *para* (the other shore), because it makes for the further shore of the ocean of existence through *samsara* (*samsarassa paratīrabhavato*), *nipuna* (subtle) because it is accessible only to a subtle cognition as well as because it is in itself of a subtle nature (*nipunañana-gocaratta sukhuma-sabhāvatta*) *sududdasa* (very difficult to see) because it cannot be apprehended save and except by the instrument of a gradually matured knowledge (*anupacitañānasambhārehi datthum na sakku*) *ajajjara* (unimpaired) because it is not affected by any

[1] *Majjhima Nikāya* I 167

[2] *Netti* p 5[illegible]

process of decay (*uppadajarahi anabyānatatta*), *dhuva* (immutable) because it is in itself for ever (*cirabhavena*) *apalokita* (not vanishing) because it does not disappear on account of decay and death (*jaramaranehi apalujjanato*) *anidassana* (invisible) because it is not perceptible to the eye common or divine (*mamsacakkhuna dibbacakkhuna ca apassitabbatta*) *nippapañca* (not subject to ramification) because of the absence of the ramifying action of passions (*rāgadipapañcabhāvena*) *santa* (tranquil) because of the total stoppage of the mischievous actions of sin (*kilesabhisankharānam vūpasamahetutaya*) *amata* (undying) because it is of an immortal nature and it is not liable to disruption (*amatahetutaya bhangābhavena*) *panīta* (excellent) because it is of a supreme kind and it is self-sufficient (*uttamatthena anappanatthena ca*) *siva* (safe) because there is no effect on it of baneful consequences of sinful deeds (*asivānam kammakilesavipakavattanam abhāvena*) *khema* (secure) because it is secure from the four fetters (*catūhi yogehi anupaddavabhāvena*), *tanhakkhaya* (attenuation of desire) because desire is attenuated to nil therein (*tanhā khīyati ettha*) *acchariya* (wonderful) because it is rarely to be seen even by those who are virtuous (*katapuññehi pi kadacid eva passitabbatta*) *abbhuta* (marvellous) because it is unprecedented (*abhūtapubbatta*) *anītika* (unimpeded) because there is no obstacle in its way (*anantarāyatta*) *anītikadhamma* (not risky) because it is not of a nature to run any risk (*anantarāyabhāvahetuto*) *ajāta* (unborn) because it is not subject to birth (*anibbatti-sabhāvato*) *abhūta* (not subject to becoming *uppādarahita*) *anupadda va* (undisturbed) because it is not troubled by any disturbing factor (*kenaci anupaddutatta*) *akata* (uncreated) because it is not manipulated by any known cause (*na kenaci paccayena katam*) *asoka* (unlamenting) because there is no sorrow in it (*n atthi ettha soko*), *visoka* (sorrowless) because there is no cause for sorrow (*sokahetuvigamena*) *anupasagga* (uncomplicated) because it is not complicated by any complication (*kenaci anupasajjitabbatta*) *anupasaggadhamma* (not of a nature to suffer from any complication), *gambhīra* (deep) because it is only within the reach of profound intuition (*gambhīrañanagocarato*) *duppassa* (difficult of perception) because it is difficult to perceive difficult to obtain without the right path (*sammāpatipattim vina passitum pattum asakkuneyyatta*) *uttara* (transcendental) because it lies beyond the whole of the mundane world (*sabbalokam*

uttaritva thitan ti), *anuttara* (unsurpassed) because there is nothing beyond it (*n atthi etassa uttaran ti*) *asama* (unequalled) because there is nothing equal to it (*samassa sadisassa abhavena*) *appatisama* (matchless) because there is no counterpart of it (*patibhāgabhavena*), *settha* (summum bonum *uttamatthena*) *jettha* (supreme) because it is the best thing for praise (*pāsan satuvatta*) *lena* (habitat) because it is the abode where persons afflicted by worldly sufferings can lie down (*samsaradukkhatthitena litabbato*) *tāna* (protection) because it protects from worldly sufferings (*tato rakkhanato*) *arana* (hitchless) because there is no hitch in it (*ranabhavena*) *anangana* (spotless) because of the absence of any spot (*anganābhavena*) *akama* (innocent (*niddosatāva*) *vimala* (unimpure) because all impurities due to passion and the rest are got rid of (*ragādimalapagamena*) *dīpa* (island) because it is not subject to innundation on account of the four kinds of flood of sin (*catūhi oghehi anajjhottharanīyato*) *sukha* (ease) because of the complete subsidence of the unease of *samsāra* (*samsāravupasamasukhatava*) *appamana* (unmeasured immeasurable) because there is nothing else to measure its worth (*pamanakaradhammābhāvato pumanan gahetun etassa na sakka ti*) *patittha* (support) because it is the stand to prevent sinking into dangerous waters of *samsāra* (*samsārasamudde anosīdanatthanatava*) *akiñcana* (having nothing by way of attachment and possession), *rāgādikiñcanābhāvena parigguhābhāvena ca*)

The list of synonyms of *nirvāna* in the *Abhidhānappadīpikā* which is substantially the same as that in the *Netti* contains such new terms as follows —

mukha (*mukhya* supreme) *arūpa* (incorporeal) *amutta* (*amūrta* formless unformed) *sarana* (ultimate refuge) *akkhara* (imperishable) *abyāpajjha* (hitchless) *anālaya* (without any stay for desire) *viratta* (end of the course of *samsara*) *kevala* (*kaivalya* a thing in itself oneness independence) *apavagga* (*apavarga* abandonment of the things of the world) *viraga* (*vairāgya* detachment) *accutapada* (immutable state) *mutti* (liberation) *visuddhi* (purity) *vimutti* (emancipation) *asankhatadhatu* (element of the absolute) *suddhi* (holiness) *nibbuti* (*nirvrti* blessedness)

The multiplication of these so-called synonyms of *nirvana* and the philological explanation of them which is, more or less fancied and fantastic, are of little help in appreciating the Buddhist conception

of *nirvāṇa* or in distinguishing the same from the Jaina or the Brahmanical conception The only sure and scientific way of attacking the problem of *nirvāṇa* would be to consider it from the different points of view Our approaches to the subject should not only be logical and mystical,[1] but also historical eschatological poetical or popular psychoethical

Historical Aspect — The wide popularity of *nirvana* as a distinct term of Indian religious thought is undoubtedly due to the greatest importance attached to it in early Buddhism by the Buddha his immediate disciples and his later followers It is somewhat astonishing that the term occurs nowhere in any of the Vedic or Brahmanical texts that may be definitely assigned to pre Buddhistic dates An exception is sought of course, to be made in favour of Pāṇini s *Aṣṭādhyāyī* accounting grammatically or etymologically for the formation of the word *nirvana* by the aphoristic rule *Nirvāṇovate* (8 2 50) Pāṇini s date if it is at all earlier cannot be far removed from that of the rise of Buddhism Secondly it is yet to be ascertained if this particular aphorism belonged actually to Pāṇini s own organon Even if it did belong it is still to be seen whether with Pāṇini the word *nirvana* was any more than a popular expression In popular usage the word *nirvana* was employed either in connection with a burning fire or in connection with a burning lamp and in both cases it meant nothing but extinction *pajjotass eva nibbānam* (*Dīgha* II, p 157) like the extinction of a burning fire or lamp *nibbanti dhīra yathayam padīpo* (*Suttanipāta* and *Khuddakapatha Ratana sutta* V 14), the wise pass away just in the same way as this burning lamp extinguishes *nibbuto gini* (*Suttanipata Dhaniya-sutta*, V 2), the fire has been extinguished *nibbuto* standing in contrast to *āhito* meaning properly kept up *purato aggi nibbāyeyya ayam me purato aggi nibbuto* (*Majjhima* I 487), if this fire before me were to extinguish, if this fire before me were extinguished

As regards Jaina literature the term *Nirvāṇa* is met with in the texts of the Āgama, — such authoritative texts as the *Kalpasūtra*, the *Sūtrakṛtanga* the *Uttarādhyayana* and the rest But the Jaina

---

[1] It is mainly from the logical and mystical points of view that Dr B M Barua has considered the question of *nirvāṇa* in his Bombay lecture *Universal Aspect of Buddhism*

predilection as may be gathered from the Jinakalpa section of the *Kalpasūtra* is to employ the term *nirvāna* to denote the final liberation of the human soul (*moksa*) from all kinds of bondage which is not possible before the demise of a Tirthankara In other words with the Jainas *nirvāna* is the same term as *parinirvāna* The nine main terms (*nava-tattva*) of Jainism which became current and widely known as early as the time of the Buddha include *nijjarā* and *mokkha* [1] The *Kalpa-sūtra* describes Mahāvira s demise in these terms Mahāvira died went off quitted the world cut asunder the ties of birth, old age and death became a *siddha* a Buddha a *mukta* a maker of the end (to all misery) finally liberated freed from all pains (*Jaina Sūtras* S B E Part I p 264)

It would be going against historical truth to suppose that *nirvāna* as a final term of Indian religious thought was altogether an innovation or invention on the part of the Buddha The very first discourse in the *Majjhima-nikāya* appropriately called *Sabbadhamma-mūlapariyāya* clearly indicated that already at the time of the rise of Buddhism *nirvāna* came to be recognized as the final term or ultimate category of Indian religious thought In this most important discourse the Buddha is recorded as distinguishing his own attitude towards *nirvana* from that which had passed as the prevalent attitude One may readily agree to think that this difference in the two attitudes or thought positions implies a difference in two conceptions or notions *nirvāna* from the cosmological or ontological point of view and *nirvana* from the logical or epistemological point of view the difference being set forth in the original text as follows

(1) *Idha bhikkhave assutava puthujjano Nibbānam nibbānato sañjānati nibbanam nibbanato saññatvā nibbanam maññati nibbānasmim maññati nibbanato maññati nibbānam me ti maññati nibbanam abhinandati* (M N I p 4)

(2) *Tathāgato pi bhikkhave araham sammāsambuddho nibbānato abhijānāti nibbanam nibbanato abhiññāya nibbānam na*

---

[1] *Devadaha-sutta Majjhima Nikāya* II p 214

purāṇānaṃ kammānaṃ tapasā vyantibhāvā navānam kammānaṃ akaranā āyatiṃ anavassavo āyatiṃ anavassavā kammakkhayo kammakkhayā dukkhakkhayo dukkhakkhayā vedanākkhayo vedanākkhayā sabbam dukkham nijjinnam bhavissati

Here the term *nijjarā* occurs instead *nijjinna*

maññati nibbānasmim na maññati nibbānato na maññati nibbanam me ti na maññati nibbānam nābhinandati (*M N* I p 6)

This may be taken to suggest two different modes of thinking, one the Brahmanist mode by which was developed the idea of *Brahmanirvāna* and the other, the Buddha s mode, by which was developed the Buddhist idea of *nirvana* With the Brahmanist of all ages *nirvana* is *Brahma-nirvāna* whether Brahman is *saguna* or *nirguna* That is to say, with the Brahmanist thinker precisely as with the Jaina the problem of *nirvana* is approached from the point of view of *ātman* whilst with the Buddha or Buddhist thinker the approach is from the view-point of *anatman* [1]

Eschatological Aspect — The belief already gained ground among the people of India at the time of the rise of Buddhism that true salvation of man consists in evolving into an eternal personality exhausting all possibilities of rebirth — of reappearing in the mother s womb as they would put it [2] The whole chain of reasoning is To be subject to birth is to be subject to decay and death The world of life is so ordained that there is no escape from decay and death for one who has been brought into existence by the natural process of creation — by the parental union in the case of all higher forms of earthly beings [3] The very possibility of such an escape is denied by the daily experience of things or events happening around and at all times [4] Even a *Buddha* or *Tathagata* cannot escape it in spite of his universally admitted and unrivalled greatness and perfection [5] And *Samsara* for an individual is nothing in

---

[1] *Vide Lankavatāra sūtra*

[2] *Metta sutta Khuddakapātha* and *Suttanipāta na hi jātu gabbhaseyyam punar eti*

[3] *Majjhima* I p 266 *Idha mātāpitaro ca sannipatitā honti mātā ca utunī hoti gandhabbo ca paccupatthito hoti evam tinnam sannipātā gabbhassāvakkanti hoti*

[4] *Mahāparinibbāna suttanta Digha* II p 158 *yam tam jatam bhūtam sankhatam palokadhammam tam mapalujjīti n etam thānam vijjati*

Cf The *Mohamudgara* verse

Yā aj jananam tāvan maranam
ta aj janani jathare sayanam

[5] So *Brahmā Sahampati* declares (*Digha* II p 157)

Sabb eva nikkhipissanti bhūta loke samussayam
yathā etādiso Satthā loke appatipuggalo

common parlance but the painful necessity of undergoing the repeated process of birth and death — of passing through the cycles of birth and death running in the course of transmigration of soul [1] or finding somehow the concatenation of individual existence through the repeated natural process of birth and death

It is the consciousness of the contingent character of *samsāra* the world of life and existence and the bitter experience of its unpleasantness or unsatisfactory sequel that is at the back of the religious quest of a permanent ground of existence and experience — a permanent feature or element of reality some sort of an Absolute So Buddha is represented as saying Having been myself subject to the contingency of birth and experienced its unpleasantness I sought for *Nirvāna* which is without such contingency — which is unsurpassed and secure from all worldly yoke and obtained it Subject to the contingency of decay the contingency of disease, death sorrow and sin I sought for *Nirvāna* which is without such and such contingency[2] — which is unsurpassed and secure from all worldly yoke and obtained it The knowledge with the vision arose Sure is my final emancipation, this is the last birth there is no longer the possibility of rebirth Then this thought occurred to me I have reached this element of things which is deep difficult to see difficult to understand tranquil excellent not within the access of mere logic, subtle and to be experienced only by the wise each for himself The multitudes find delight in the home they are attached to the home and rejoice over it It is difficult indeed for them to apprehend this position (of *samsāra*) namely the causal determination of all occurrences in fact, — of all becoming — to apprehend also this position (of Nirvāna) namely that it is the subsidence of all predisposition towards the form of creation the relinquishment of all ideas of belongings, the extinction of desire the dispassion the cessation the ultimate [3]

Even the Buddha himself is recorded as saying (*Majjhima* I p 82) *Aham kho pana etarahi jinno vuddho mahallako addhagato vayo anuppatto asitiko me vayo vattati*

[1] The idea is Brahmanical as well as Jaina

[2] The Buddhistic way of expressing it

[3] *Majjhima* I p 167 So *kho aham attanā jātidhammo samāno jātidhamme ādinavam viditvā ajātam anuttaram yogakkhemam nibbānam pariyesamāno*

The authoritative utterance or verbal testimony (*aññā ājña*) of all the Early Buddhist Brethren and Sisters is to this effect I have lived the holy life done all that I was to do and am now free from all attachment Completely destroyed is the cause of birth through cycles of existence there is no longer the possibility of any re-birth' [1]

But is this a genuine feeling felt in the innermost depth of one's being or self-consciousness or in actuality? The question was raised by many an interested inquirer in Buddha's time, and it still remains What happens to a Tathāgata (Perfect Man) after death? Does he continue to exist or does he cease to exist? Does he both exist and not exist or does he neither exist nor not exist? [2]

Buddha felt constrained to remain silent whenever such an inquiry was pressed He was always reluctant to commit himself to any statement in reply to any of the above four queries The real reason is that he was not prepared to admit any of the questions, — to enter in the inquiry in that form With the inquirers however those were the question of questions the question that vitally concerned them

In the *Cūḷa-Malunkya Sutta* (*Majjhima* I p 432), Mālunkyaputta is advised by Buddha to treat his *avyakata* (point in regard to which he did not commit himself to any one-sided statement whatsoever) as *avyākata* and his *vyākata* as *vyakata* The inquiry referred to above is to be counted among Buddha's *avyakatas* Seeing that another inquirer *Aggi-Vacchagotta* got rather puzzled than enlightened when he was told in all stages of inquiry Vaccha

---

ajātan ajaran abyādhim amatam asokam asan kilitthum anuttaram yogakkhemam nibbānam ajjhagamam Ñañan ca pana me dassunam udapādi akuppū me vimutti ayam antimā jāti n atthi dāni punabbhavo ti Tassa mayham etad ahosi Adhi ato kho me ayam dhammo gambhīro duddaso duranubodho santo panito atakka avaro nipuno panditavedaniyo Ālayarāmāya kho pana pajāya ālayaratāya ālayasammuditāya duddasam idam thānam yadidam idappaccayatā paticcasamuppādo idam pi kho thānam duddasam yadidam sabbasankhārasamatho sabbūpadhipatinissaggo tanhakkhayo virago nirodho nibbanam

[1] *Theragāthā and Therigāthā Vusitam brahmacariyam katam karaniyam anāsavam Vikkhino jāti samsāro n atthi dāni punabbhavo*

[2] *Majjhima* I pp 4-6 ff *Kim nu kho hoti na hoti hoti ca na ca hoti ... eva hoti na na hoti Tathāgato param maranā?*

the inquiry in this form does not suit me, is not fitting (*na upeti*), Buddha felt it necessary to explain his own position thus: —

Just as it is not possible to know whither the fire is gone which was so long burning before a man after once for all it is extinguished on the exhaustion of all materials of burning — the fuel, in the same way it is not possible to represent a Tathāgata after he has passed away on the complete exhaustion of all materials of bodily existence and of all prerequisites of representation of an individual as commonly known.[1]

To say that Buddha attained *parinirvana* (*sambuddho parinibbuto*) is the same as to say in ordinary language that he died (*kalam akari muni*).[2] In his own words, to attain *parinirvana* is to see the fire of life extinguished in that elemental condition of extinction which allows no residuum of possibility for re-ignition (*anupadisesa-yanibbanadhātuya parinibbuto*). The manner in which Buddha attained *parinirvāna* is said to have been described by *Thera Anuruddha* in the following terms: There was then no process of respiration to be noticed in the organism of the great saint whose mind was then unshaken, steadily concentrated that it then was on its peacefulness when he expired. With an unperturbed mind he did bear the pangs of death. Just as fire extinguishes on the exhaustion of all materials of burning, in the same way his consciousness became completely emancipated.[3]

In the *Ratana Sutta* the Disciples of Buddha who experience or realize the bliss of *nirvana* are praised as personages who expire like a burning lamp (on the exhaustion of oil and wick).[4] Whilst

[1] *Majjhima* I, pp 487—488. The statement is summarized for the sake of brevity. *Yena rūpena ... vedanāya ... saññāya ... yehi sankhārehi ... yena viññāṇena Tathāgatam paññāpayamāno paññāpeyya tam viññāṇam Tathāgatassa pahīnam ucchinnamūlam tālāvatthukatam anabhāvakatam āyatim anuppādadhammam ... viññāṇasankhāvimutto kho Vaccha Tathāgato gambhīro appameyyo duppariyogāho seyyathā pi mahāsamuddo ... upapajjatīti na upeti, na upapajjatīti na upeti.*

[2] *Dīgha* II, p 157.

[3] *Dīgha* II, p 157.

Nāhu assāsa-passāso ṭhitacittassa tādino
Anejo santim ārabbha yam kālam akari muni
Asallīnena cittena vedanam ajjhavāsayi
Pajjotass' eva nibbānam vimokkho cetaso ahū ti

[4] *Nibbanti dhīrā yathāyam padīpo* (*Khuddakapāṭha* p 5).

they live they live enjoying the bliss of peace obtained without having to pay any price for it [1]

Such is in short the Buddhist description of *parinirvāna* which is the natural end of life of those gifted men who realize *nirvana* in their present conscious existence (*ditth eva dhamme*) [2]

With the Jaina too, *parinirvāna* is the last fruit or final consummation of the highest perfection attained by a man or attainable in human life [3] But with him *parinirvana* is the same term as *nirvāna* [4] or *moksa* meaning final liberation that comes to pass on the complete waning out or exhaustion of the accumulated strength or force of *karma*

With the Jaina however *nirvāna* or *moksa* is not a dreadful or terrible term like the Buddhist *parinirvāna* which suggests at once an idea of the complete annihilation of individuality of a saint after death by the simile of the total extinction of a burning lamp on the exhaustion of the oil and the wick So the point is discussed in the Jaina *Moksasiddhi* 'Would you really think (with the Buddhist) that *nirvāna* is a process of extinction of human soul which is comparable to the process of extinction of a burning lamp (on the exhaustion of the oil and the wick)?' [5] The hearer is advised not to think like that For with the Jaina *nirvāna* is nothing but a highly

---

[1] *Laddhā sudhā nibbutim bhuñjamānā* (ibid p 4)

[2] Cf
Dīpo yathā nirvrtimabhyupeto
naivāvanim gacchati nāntariksam
disam na kāñcit vidisam na kāñcit
snehaksayāt kevalameti sāntim
Jīvas tathā nirvrtimabhyupeto
naivāvanim gacchati nāntariksam
Disam na kāñcit vidisam na kāñcit
klesaksayāt kevalameti sāntim
(*Saundarananda Kāvya*)

[3] *Kalpasūtra* (Jacobi's edition) 120 *Tassa nam anuttarenam nānenam damsenenam carittenam ālaenam vihārenam virienam ajjavenam maddavenam lāghavenam anuttarāe muttie guttie tutthie buddhie anuttarenam sacca samjamatavasucariyā sovaciya phala parinivvāna*

[4] *Kalpasutra* 159 *Tasmim samae Mahāvīro nivvuo* [illegible] = Pali *parinibbuto*

[5] *Mannasi kim dīvassa va nāso nivvānam assa jīvassa?* quoted in the *Abhidhāna rājendra sub voce Nibbāna*

special or transcendental condition of human soul, in which it remains eternally and absolutely free from passion, hatred, birth, decay, disease and the like because of the complete waning out of all causes of *dukkha*.[1]

The *Milindapañha* definitely says that after the attainment of *parinirvāna* the Buddha is no longer in that condition in which he is able to receive any offering made in his honour, though the offering itself as an act of worship is not fruitless on that account so far as the worshipper is concerned. Thus the Buddhist description of Buddha's *parinirvana* leaves no room for the popular belief in the possibility of resurrection of the bodily form or even the spiritual form of a saint.[2] Is it, nevertheless, a complete cessation of personality, even if that personality is made up of pure consciousness? According to the *Laṅkavatāra-Sūtra* there is then *lakṣana-nirodha* (cessation of all signs of manifestation) but no *prabandha-nirodha* (cessation of process of *vijñāna* in its own pure or transcendental mode).[3]

In all stages of evolution of religious thought in India the description of the ultimate goal of the higher path of religious effort carried with it the dread of extinction of the individual after death. In the opinion of such ancient law-givers as Baudhāyana and Āpastamba the *devayāna* leading the traveller by an onward journey to the pure realm of infinity beyond the solar region led really but to the funeral ground *smaśāna* and those who travel by that path alone, in disregard of *pitryana* become ultimately dust and perish (*rajo bhūtvā dhvamsate*).[4]

Rsi Yājñavalkya's statement of the fate of the soul after man's death caused puzzlement to the simple minded Maitreyī. Verily I say unto thee the soul is complete in itself, within and without. As a mass of intelligence (or consciousness) it emerges out of these (five) elements and loses its form of manifestation with their dis-

---

[1] *Sato ca dvārāvasyā jīvassa visiṭṭa kāya ... asthā ... kathaṁ ... rāga ... dosa janmarāya ... dukkhassa ... rūpā*

Note the description of emergence of an effulgent miniature form of the sage Śarabhaṅga out of burning fire to which he offered himself as an oblation. *Vide Rāmāyana, Āraṇyakāṇḍa.*

[3] *Vide Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* (Nanjio's edition).

[4] Barua, *History of pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy*, pp. 247—249.

integration There is no cognizance of it after man s death [1] He offered an explanation the tenor of which went to establish that as the soul after man s death passes beyond all duality it does not admit of any representation in the current terms of thought It then becomes the whole or infinity and the whole or infinity is its own description [2]

Similarly Buddha s persistent reluctance to answer any of the four questions put to him regarding the fate of the Tathāgata after death caused puzzlement to his interlocutor Aggi-Vacchagotta [3] Buddha too offered an explanation the purport of which was to indicate that the condition of Tathāgata after *parinirvāna* was incapable of description in all convenient terms of description *rūpa vedanā, saññā, sankhara and viññāna*

An illuminating description of the state or condition of existence reached by a person on the attainment of *parinirvāna* is met with in the *Udana* (p 9) and it has been put into the mouth of Buddha himself The same is quoted below in the original with its translation —

Yattha āpo ca pathavī tejo vāyo na gādhati
Na tattha sukkā jotanti ādicco na ppakasati
Na tattha candima bhāti tamo tattha na vijjati
Yadā ca attan āvedi muni monena brāhmano
atha rūpā arūpa ca sukhadukkhā pamuccatī ti

Where water, earth, heat and air do not find footing there no light burns and the sun does not shine the moon does not shed her radiant beams and darkness does not exist there When a sage who is a brāhmana has realized the truth by silent concentration then he becomes free from form and formlessness happiness and suffering

Poetical Aspect — *Nirvāna* or *Parinirvāna* a an abstract idea or is a transcendental sphere of man s existence cannot have a

[1] *Brhad Ar Upa* Chap II Vs 12 and 13 *ātmanantaro bahyah krtsnah pra jñān a ghan (= vijñāna ghan) eva etebhyo bhutebhyah samutthāya tāny eva anuvi naśyati na pretya samjñāstvasti hra iti brāmīti hovāca Yājñavalkyah Sā hovāca atraiva mā bhagavān mohāntam āpīpipann i*

Brhad Ār Upa Chap II 14 *Yatra hi dvaitam iva bhavati taditara itaram abhi vadati vijānāti yatra tv asya sarvam ātmaivābhūt tat kena kam srnuyāt*

[3] *Majjhima* I p 487 *Etthāha bho Gotama aññān āpādim sammoham āpādim*

true and lasting appeal to the popular mind which demands for its satisfaction the conception and description of someting more positive and tangible. The process of poetry and myth becomes therefore, active to create that something more positive and tangible — a paradise in its highest glory. The beginning of this process of poetry and myth can be clearly traced in a group of verses known by the name of *Accharāgatha* (*Samyutta* I *Sagathavagga*). In these verses Buddhism is described as the safest and fittest vehicle (*yāna*) carrying all men, women, recluses and householders to *Nirvana* which is the destination. The progress of the Buddhist aspirant towards this goal is poetically described in terms of a noiseless and fearless and steady procession or chariot-march by a straight road and with an unerring aim.[1]

The account of Buddha's Great Decease in the *Mahāparinibbana-Suttanta* makes it evident that it was too much for average men to brook the idea that a great Buddha, too, failed to overcome death in spite of his unrivalled greatness and enviable perfection. This fact was dreadful to them as it went to furnish them with the last proof of man's inability to overcome death of which the whole of sentient creation is mortally afraid. To say that one cannot possibly overcome death after being once in the grip of birth, but one can surely overcome the fear of death is no answer to the real yearning of their heart. The belief gradually gained ground among certain Buddhists that the Buddhas as superhuman personalities exist in all quarters (*Sabbā disā Buddhā titthanti*).[2]

The *Milinda-pañha* gives a realistic and at the same time exaggerated poetical description of *Dhammanagara* or ideal Buddhist city as it came to prevail within a few centuries after Buddha's demise.[3] Even in a somewhat earlier stage of Buddhist poetic fancy, one has in the Pāli *Apadāna*[4] a charming romantic description of *Buddha-khetta* (The Realm of Buddha) in which all Buddhas, all

[1] *Ujuko nāma so maggo abhayā nāma sā disā ratho akujano nāma dhamma-cakkehi* [illegible] Cf. *Prakrit Dhammapada* by Barua and Mitra, p. 1[illegible].
   Kathāvatthu II. 6[illegible].

[3] *Milinda-pañha*, pp. [illegible]–345.

[4] *Apadāna* I, Verses [illegible]–30: *Sabbā Buddhā* [illegible]
   Aññamaññaṃ [illegible]
   Buddhā Paccekabuddhā ca sāvakā paricārakā
   [illegible]

Disciples and all followers and worshippers find their place. No birth, no death. No sorrow, no lamentation. A ceaseless scene of peaceful worship and religious conversation in the midst of the very best of natural surroundings. A full heart and a serene mind in a world of plenty.

The same process of poetry and myth continued to produce at last the Sanskrit *Sukhāvatī-vyūha*, a Mahāyāna work giving a highly romantic or imaginative description of a Buddhist Paradise, the realm of Amitābha, Amitaprabha. The Sukhāvatī is the infinite world of light, brilliance and effulgence. The Amitābha, as it may be easily guessed, is no other than the Buddha in his infinite glory after his demise — the *mahāparinibbāna*.

A similar poetic imagery about *nirvāna* lingers in the metaphorical expression *nirvānanagara* or *nirvānapura* which is met with in Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga* and some of the later Jaina works.

Logical Aspect. — If it be assumed that *samsāra*, as commonly understood, is something which has the contingency of birth, development and death (*jāta, bhūta, mata*), the inquiry may pertinently arise if there is something else which has no such contingency (*ajāta, abhūta, amata*). This inquiry was once pressed by certain inquirers among Buddha's immediate disciples. When the issue was thus pressed, Buddha gave a reply, the tenor of which went to convince the inquirers that they simply begged the question in pressing such an inquiry. The argument indeed was: 'The very fact that you have been striving after that something else which is without such contingency is sufficient to prove that you have been tacitly all believers in its possibility, and were you not tacitly believers in its possibility, you would not have cared to strive after it.'[1]

According to Nāgārjuna, *Samsāra* and *Nirvāna* are two relative ideas, and as such there can be difference but no absolute distinction between the two (*samsārasya ca nirvānasya nāsti kiñcit visesatā*). If the significance of one term is dependent on the significance of the other, both stand on the same footing in respect of each other. There cannot be any conception of a relation between the two even in apposition, if there be not a common point of reference which is without differentiation or characterization, and from which

[1] *Udāna*, pp. 80—81.

ultimately each derives its significance By implication this common point of reference is no other than *pratītyasamutpāda dharmatā tathatā* or *śūnyatā* which is introduced in the very opening verse of Nāgārjuna's *Kārikā* The *pratītyasamutpāda* viewed and interpreted as a law of sequence of causal antecedents and consequents — as causally determined continuity (*santati*) explains the essential nature of *saṁsāra* The same, viewed and interpreted as novelty (*uppādamatta*[1], *khanapaccuppanna*[2]) without any idea of temporal or spatial relation associated with it, expresses the essential nature of *Nirvāṇa* or Infinity In plain terms the *pratītyasamutpāda* in its *samudpāda* aspect is *saṁsāra* and the same in its *nirodha* aspect is *Nirvāṇa*[3] The Canonical authority to be cited in this connection is Buddha's statement in the *Ariyapariyesana-sutta* (*Majjhima Nikāya* I p 167)

By the dialectical process of reasoning employed in the *Mūlapariyāya-Sutta* (*Majjhima*) Buddha sought to show that *Nirvāṇa* cannot but be the final term or last category of thought If the first sources of knowledge be perception or intuition (*diṭṭha*) tradition (*suta*) and inference (*muta*) all that is derived from these three sources may be comprehended and made significant by the term *viññāta* (the known i e knowledge) The first three terms cannot exhaust the meaning of *viññāta* which is something more than what is comprehended by them jointly or severally If *ekatta* (unity) be the next category to express the essential character of knowledge (*viññāta* the known) yet another category — *nānatta* (plurality) is needed to cover the residual of meaning not covered by *ekatta* To comprehend the meaning of both *ekatta* (unity) and *nānatta* (plurality), another category is called forth namely *sabba* (the all, universality) which is something more in meaning than what is comprehended by both *ekatta* and *nānatta* Even *sabba* (the intellectual

---

[1] According to Buddhaghosa *uppādamatta* cannot be a valid interpretation of *paṭiccasamuppāda* (*Visuddhimagga* II p 519)

[2] For the term see *Atthasālinī* pp 420—1

Paccuppannam nāma etam tividham khaṇa santati addhā santati paccuppannam c'ettha aṭṭhakathāsu āgatam addhā paccuppannam sutte Tattha keci khaṇa paccuppannam cittam cetopariyañāṇassa ārammaṇam hoti ti vadanti Kim kāraṇā? Yasmā iddhimassa parassa ca ekakkhaṇe cittam uppajjati ti idañ ca tesam opammam

[3] Vide chapter on *Buddhist Conception of Dhamma*

universality) is in itself inadequate to comprehend the whole of reality which is constituted not only of cognition but also of volition and feeling, to comprehend all of which yet another category is required, and it is *Nirvāna* (the Ideal, Ideality) It is not an experience that one may identify oneself with it or think that either one is *Nirvana* or one is in *Nirvāna*, or one is from *Nirvāna*, or *Nirvāna* is one's own [1]

Psychical Aspect — Here psychical is just another term for mystical The mystic as distinguished from *saddhāvimutta* (devotee) or *paññāvimutta* (intellectualist), aspires to be a *Kayasakkhi* [2] or personal witness to to be face to face with to have a direct perception of, to come in immediate contact with in short to realize *nirvana* by himself and for himself It is after such realization that he begins to utter the joy of self-expression (*udānam udaneti*), to give an expression to self-mastery (*aññā*) and to teach the way of realizing *nirvāna* to others (*abhiññā sacchikatvā pavedeti*) With him *nirvana* is at once a vision an experience a feeling and a self-state — the highest, the best, the most real of all that he knows of thinks of, or speaks of As an element of experience it is inalienable, because the wise are to experience each in himself by himself and for himself (*paccattam viññūhi veditabbam*) it cannot be communicated to others, because its nature as experienced by each individual is indescribable in words The message or personal testimony must be worthy of trust, the individual bearing it must be in a perfectly sound condition of body mind intellect and spirit The vision of *nirvāna* dawns upon consciousness the realization of *nirvāna* is possible in that stage of *samadhi* (trance self-concentration) which is aptly called *saññāvedayitanirodha* According to Buddha's claim, this is the ninth stage of *samādhi* reached for the first time by him one step ahead of eight *samapattis* (attainments first stages of *samadhi*) mastered by other contemplatives in India already before his advent [3] The *Satipatthana* is the well-tried grammar to be followed by the aspirant in assuredly reaching and mastering all the nine stages of *samādhi* the ninth being truly

---

[1] *Majjhima* I p 6

[2] See for the explanation of these terms Barua's Faith in Buddhism in B C Law's *Buddhistic Studies* pp 3[illegible]0—340

[3] *Ariyapariyesana Sutta* *Majjhima* I pp 163—6

called *nirvikalpa* (without any excogitation) and *nirābhāsa* (without any illusion or hallucination) Without going into details here it may suffice to quote the following short but intelligible description of the psychical mode

In accordance with the mystical or psychical mode the process of meditation is to proceed from one plane of experience or one level of consciousness to another The highest state of trance reached by Buddha is called *saññā-vedayita-nirodha* This is a state of trance when outwardly the man who reaches it is as good as dead [1] there being nothing but warmth (*usma*) as the sign of life [2] In this state a level of consciousness (*citta*) is reached where consciousness is ultimately thrown back on itself completely void (*suñña*) being devoid of the subject-object relation (*grāhya-grāhaka-bhāva-rahita*) [3] In the same state, a plane of religious experience is reached where there is no longer any longing for this or that object of sense This is the highest psychical state where consciousness appears to be face to face with reality [4]

Ethical Aspect — The ethical aspect of *nirvāna* is too well-known to need much elucidation here [5] Let it suffice to say that the main ethical term to express the nature of Buddhist *nirvana* (and *a posteriori* that of Jaina) [6] is *Visuddhi* or Purity From the ethical point of view, to realise *nirvāna* is to attain the highest purity of one's own self, — of one's own nature (*visuddhim attano*) Thus the

---

[1] When on the eve of the Great Decease Buddha remained lost in the *samādhi* called *saññā-vedayita-nirodha* Ānanda thought he was already dead and gone See *Dīgha* II p 156 *Parinibbuto bhante Anuruddha Bhagavā ti Na āvuso Ānanda Bhagavā parinibbuto saññā-vedayitanirodham samāpanno ti*

[2] Dr N Dutt (*Aspects of Mahāyāna Buddhism and its relation to Hīnayāna* pp 1[illegible]9 foll) has attempted an elaborate description of the *jhāna* and *samādhi* stages which is not however so illuminating and clear and psychological as that in Shwe Zan Aung's Introductory Essay *Compendium of Buddhist Philosophy*

[3] *Madhyāntavibhāga-sūtrabhāṣya-ṭīkā* of Sthiramati Pt I p 10 *Śūnyatā* (*Śūnyatā*) *grāhya-grāhaka-(bhāva)-rahitatā*

[4] Barua Bombay Lecture *Universal Aspect of Buddhism*

[5] *Childers* Art on *Nibbana* in Dict of the Pali Language *Nibbāna* in the *Pāli English Dict* by Rhys Davids views of Dr L Vallee Poussin Prof Theodore Stcherbatsky and Prof Berriedale Keith about *Nirvāṇa*

[6] *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* I 1 2 27 (*Jaina Sūtras* Part II p 243) by purity of the heart one reaches *Nirvāṇa*

method of realization of *nirvana* necessarily involves a process of perfect self-examination self-purification self-restraint and self-culture If the experience of *nirvāna* consists in the feeling of peacefulness tranquillity or harmony in the whole of one s being and in the whole of nature by which one is surrounded it is not possible without the practice of self-alienation from all that is not one s own Thus the process of a self-alienation involves a method of viewing things as they are (*yathābhūtam bhūtam bhūtato thitam thitato*) From one point of view the twofold ethical end of Buddhism is negative (1) to keep off the hindrances (*nīvaranas*) and (2) to put away the fetters (*samyojanas*) or to destroy the *anusayas* (the sinfulness that lies deep in our nature) From another point of view the end is positive namely to attain a perfect healthy condition of self The rough scheme of self-culture through purity is set forth in the *Rathavinītasutta* (*Majjhima*, I pp 147—8) and it includes the following main items for consideration —

Sīla visuddhi Purity of conduct purity of behaviour purity of livelihood purity of motive, purity of morals, purity of character

Citta-visuddhi Purity of mind, purity of all things mental purity of mental attitude purity of mental vision, purity of mental development etc

Ditthi-visuddhi Purity of faith purity of thought purity of intellect

Kankhavitarana-visuddhi Purity of faith by the removal of doubt

Maggamaggañanadassana-visuddhi Purity of the path by the true understanding of what is and what is not the path

Patipadāñānadassana-visuddhi Purity of the intellectual perception of the true path

Ñānadassana-visuddhi Purity of knowledge and insight

The main items are really three *Sīlavisuddhi* (Purity of morals), *Cittavisuddhi* (Purity of mind) and *Paññavisuddhi* (Purity of knowledge)

The rough sketch of the Buddhist system of Purity was developed by Buddhadatta in his *Abhidhammāvatara* and more fully by Upatissa in his *Vimuttimagga* The final development of the system took place in Buddhaghosa s *Visuddhimagga* There is no other

Buddhist work which bears comparison with Buddhaghosa's Path of Purity in respect of thoroughness and painstaking analysis

4 *General Buddhist View* — *Nirvāna* means the annihilation of passion, hatred and delusion It is the waning out of all evils — ***raga, dosa,*** and ***moha,*** — the diminishing of the vicious and the weak in the man which is the negative aspect of his positive advance in becoming (Mrs Rhys Davids, *The Minor Anthologies* I p xix) According to Childers it means (1) the state of blissful sanctification of (wordly) existence in which Arhatship ends (*Dict of the Pali Language* p 266) In its negative aspect it means the going out of greed ill will and dullness and also freedom from these it may be variously described as comfort, end to ill end of becoming or life end of craving and the rest In its positive aspect and as subjectively considered, it means mental illumination conceived as light, insight state of feeling happiness, and cool and calm and content (*sītibhāva nibbuti upasama*) peace safety, and self-mastery Objectively considered it means truth the highest good a supreme opportunity a regulated life communion with the Best and bringing congenial work [1]

According to the *Khuddakapatha* *Nirvāna* is immortality (*amata*) and the bliss of emancipation (*nibbuti*) It is the tranquil state (*santam padam*)

According to the *Dhammapada* *Nirvana* is immortality the opposite of which is death The path of action is the path to immortality and the way of indolence is the way to death (***appamādo amatapadam pamādo maccuno padam***) It is secure from the worldly contact and unsurpassed in its reach The path that leads to gain is one and the path that leads to *Nirvāna* another (***añña hi lābhūpanisā aññā nibbānagaminī***) The Buddhas declare the *Nirvāna* as the highest condition (***paramam***) It is the greatest happiness (***paramam sukham***) With the vision of *Nirvana* the sinful nature vanishes for ever (***attham gacchanti āsava***) Without knowledge there is no meditation without meditation there is no knowledge he who has knowledge and meditation is near unto *Nirvāna* (***yamhi jhanañ ca paññā ca, sa ve nibbanasantike***)

It is distinctly stated in the *Sutta-Nipāta* that *Nirvana* is a

[1] The characterization is based on The Psalms of the Early Buddhist Brethren and Sisters

matchless island which possesses nothing grasps at nothing and which is the destroyer of decay and death (pp 211—12)[1] The world is bound by pleasure and by leaving desire *Nirvana* can be attained (*Ibid* pp 214—215)

According to the *Alinacitta Jātaka* (II Cowell p 17) one who possesses strong will cherishes all good takes to the Refuge and follows the path leading to *Nirvāna*, is capable of destroying all ties by slow degrees The *Mora Jataka* (Cowell II, p 26) describes *Nirvāna* as the only everlasting thing, and says that all other things being composite in their nature are unsubstantial transient and subject to living and death The *Gandatindu Jataka* (Cowell V p 55) says that zeal is the way to *Nirvana*

According to the *Visuddhimagga* (Vol II, p 612) *Nirvana* is the extinction of the five *Khandhas*[2] The attributes of *Nirvana* consist of absence of passion destruction of pride, getting rid of thirst freedom from attachment and destruction of all sensual pleasures It is the cessation of all sufferings It can be attained through meditation wisdom precept steadfastness and the rest

According to the *Atthasalinī* (p 409), *Nirvana* means that from which the arrow of desire is gone away (*tanha sankhātam vānam niggatam vā tasmā vāruti nibbānam*) It is freedom from all sins and final release from lower nature

In the *Sumangalavilasinī* (I 217) Buddhaghosa says that a person obtains *Nirvāna* by making himself free from the wilderness of misdeeds It is described here as the state of bliss

In the *Kathavatthupakarana atthakatha* (p 178) *Nirvāna* is described as a void[3]

According to the *Abhidhammatthasangaha* *Nirvana* is so called because it is a departure from that craving which is called *vāna* lusting or craving It is to be realized through knowledge belonging to the four paths It is the object of those paths and their fruition It is supramundane or transcendental (*lokuttara*) It is excellent uncreated, and free from lust

According to Nāgasena's view in the *Milinda* an *Ariya* *ałaku*

---

[1] *Akiñcanam anādānam etam dīpam anāparam nibbanam iti nam brumi jarāmaccuparikkhayam*

[2] *Pañcannam khandhānam nirodho* (*Visuddhimagga* *II* *p* 611)

[3] *Nibbānasamkhataya Suññataya*

does not take pleasure in the senses and their objects Inasmuch as he does not find delight in them, in him craving ceases and by the cessation of craving (*tanha*) grasping (*upādāna*) ceases, and by the cessation of grasping, becoming (*bhava*) ceases, and when becoming has ceased birth ceases, and with its cessation, birth old age and death grief lamentation pain sorrow, and despair cease to exist In this sense cessation is *Nirvana*

Just as those whose hands and feet have not been cut off know how sad a thing it is to have them cut off by hearing the sounds of the lamentation of those whose hands and feet have been cut off even so it is by hearing the pleasing words of those who have seen *Nirvāna* that they know how happy a state it is

Nirvana being uncaused there is a cause that will bring about the realization of *Nirvana*, but there is no cause that will bring about *Nirvana* itself A man by his ordinary power can go up from a certain place to the Himalayas the king of mountains but he cannot bring the Himalayas to his place Such is the case with *Nirvāna* Further *Nirvana* is uncompounded, not made of anything yet it exists It is perceptible to the mind By means of his pure heart refined and straight free from the obstacles free from low cravings the disciple of the Noble One can realize *Nirvana* Just as wind exists though it cannot be shown by its colour or its form, whether as thin or thick, or short or long, even so *Nirvāna* exists, though it cannot be shown in colour or in form

The supposed purity of infant mind is no comparison for the purity of consciousness in *Nirvana* The mind of one under seven years of age is powerless and weak mean, small slight obscure and dull, whereas the condition of *Nirvāna* is transcendental, important weighty wide-reaching and extensive The infant with imperfect mind is unable to grasp an idea so great

Nirvana is all bliss though the process seeking after it is painful It is bliss unalloyed When it is suggested that *Nirvāna* is painful it is simply meant that the process of seeking after *Nirvāna* is painful, while *Nirvāna* itself is bliss, pure and simple and there is no pain mixed with it

Just as it is impossible to tell the measure of the water in the sea or the number of creatures dwelling therein though after all the sea exists so it is impossible to tell the form or figure or duration

or measure of *Nirvāna* though after all, it is a condition that does exist These are some of its characteristics It is untarnished by evil dispositions It is cool and assuages the fever arising from all evil dispositions It does allay the thirst of the craving after lusts, the craving after future life, and the craving after wordly prosperity It is the refuge of beings tormented with the poison of evil dispositions It does put an end to grief It is ambrosia It is mighty and boundless and fills not with all beings who enter into it It is the abode of all 'good men — the *Arahats* It is all in blossom as it were with the innumerable and various and fine flowers of purity of knowledge and of emancipation It is the support of life for it puts an end to old age and death It does increase the power of *iddhi* or supernormal powers It puts a stop in all beings to the suffering arising from evil disposition It overcomes in all beings the weakness which arises from hunger and every sort of pain It is not born neither does it grow old it does not pass away it has no rebirth it is unconquerable thieves cannot carry it, it is not attached to anything it is the sphere in which *arahats* move nothing can obstruct it, and it is infinite It satisfies every desire It causes delight It is full of lustre It is hard to attain to It is unequalled in the beauty of its perfume It is praised by all the Noble ones It is beautiful in righteousness It has the pleasant perfume of righteousness It has a pleasant taste It is very exalted It is immoveable It is inaccessible to sinners It is a condition in which no evil dispositions can grow It is free from desire to please and from resentment

Nirvāna is neither past nor future, nor present nor produced nor not-produced, nor producible

Lastly *Nirvāna* is to be known by freedom from distress and danger by confidence, peace calm bliss happiness delicacy purity and freshness He who orders his life aright, realizes that *Nirvana* He who gains the highest fruit of Arahatship, may be said to have seen *Nirvana* face to face

A layman also can attain *Nirvana* A close study of the *Guhatthaka-Sutta* (p 58) and the *Jarā-Sutta* (p 129) of the *Mahāniddesa* together with their commentaries by Dhammapāla helps up to look for the *munis* both among the householders and the recluse The *munis* are defined as persons who have attenuated their sins and

have seen *Nirvāna* and as to householders they are represented as persons who are over-burdened with all household duties No other discrimination is sought to be made between the *Āgāramunis* and the *Anagāramunis* than this that while the former keep to household life the latter do not As for the attainment, both are held out as equally competent to win the highest state which is *Nirvāna*[1] In the *Anguttara Nikāya*, we find mention of 21 lay *arahats*[2] Rhys Davids in his introduction to the *Samaññaphala Sutta* calls them laymen *arahats* (S B B, II, 63 fn) In the *Kathavatthu* (P T S Bk IV p 268), we find *Kulaputta* Yasa householder Uttiya and young Brahman Setu attained arahatship in all the circumstances characterizing the life of the laity[3] Referring to this point S Z Aung and Mrs Rhys Davids have inferred that a layman under exceptional circumstances may attain arahatship but to keep it he must give up the world (*Points of Controversy*, p 158 fn) Rhys Davids and Mrs Rhys Davids in Part III p 5 of the *Dialogues of the Buddha* (S B B Vol IV) have raised this question who in the oldest period could be an *arahat*? The answer is Any one — men or women, old or young, lay or *religieux* It is distinctly mentioned in the *Milindapañha* that, whether he is a layman or a recluse, he who attains the supreme insight to the supreme conduct of life he too will win his way to the excellent condition of *arahatship*

---

[1] *Āgāram majjhe vasantā āgāram imino pabbajjūpagatā anāgāramunino satta sekkham imino arahantā asekhamunino paccekabuddhā pa cekamunino ammā sambuddhā munimunino Āgāramunino āgārikā ti kasigorakkhādi āgārika kammam nissitā ... vidāti ... nanibbānā viññāta āsanāti viññātam sukhati ayasāsana ... etesanti viññāta āsinā Anāgārā ti kasigorakkhādi āgāriyakam manam etesam natthī ti pabbajjitā anāgārā ti vuccanti* (*Commentary on the Mahā niddesa* Siamese Edition p 218 *Guhatthaka Sutta and Jarā Sutta*)

[2] *Chal bhikkha c dhammabhi samannāgato Bhalliko gahapati Sudatto gahapati Anāthapindiko Citto gahapati Macchikāsandiko Hatthako Ālavako Mahānāmo Sakko Uggo gahapati Vesāliko Uggato gahapati Sūro Ambattho Jīvako Komārabhacco Nakulapitā gahapati Tavakanniko gahapati Pūrano gahapati Isidatto gahapati Sandhāno gahapati Vijayo gahapati Vajjiyamahito gahapati Mendako gahapati Vāsettho upāsako Aritho upāsako Sāraggo upāsako Tathāgate nittham gato amataddaso amatam sacchikatvā iriyati* (*Anguttara Nikāya* Vol III p 451 Cf *Vinaya* I 17)

[3] *Yaso kulaputto Uttiyo gahapati Setu mānavo gihissa byañjanena arahattam pattā tena vattabbe ... Gihī ssa Arahā ti*

> *Gihī pi maharaja sammā-patipanno āradhako hoti nāyam dhammam kusalam pabbajito pi mahārāja sammāpatipanno ārādhako hoti nāyam dhammam kusalam*

It is clear from this that the householder if he leads a religious life may attain to *arahatship* which is *nirvāna* The *Milindapañha* further points out that whosoever has attained, as a layman to *arahatship* one of the two courses is left to him and no other — either that very day he enters the Order or he dies for beyond that day he cannot last (*The Questions of King Milinda*, II, p 96)

All persons who as laymen, living at home and in the enjoyment of the pleasures of senses realize in themselves the condition of Peace the Supreme Good *Nirvāna* — all of them had in former births accomplished their training, laid the foundation in the practice of the thirteen vows had purified their walk and conduct by means of them and so now even as laymen living at home and in the enjoyment of the pleasures of senses they do realize in themselves the condition of Peace, the Supreme Good *Nirvana* (*Ibid* II p 253)

INDEX

WORKS BY
DR BIMALA CHURN LAW Ph D M A, B L

No.	Title	Rs	As
1	A History of Pali Literature Vol I	7 —	0
2	A History of Pali Literature Vol II	7 —	0
3	A Study of the Mahāvastu	8 —	0
4	Supplement to the Study of the Mahāvastu	1 —	0
5	Geography of Early Buddhism	2 —	0
6	Buddhistic Studies	20 —	0
7	Some Kṣatriya Tribes of Ancient India	10 —	[illegible]
8	Ancient Mid Indian Kṣatriya Tribes Vol I	8 —	0
9	Ancient Indian Tribes	3 —	0
10	Ancient Indian Tribes Vol II	1 —	8
11	The Life and Work of Buddhaghosa	7 —	8
12	Historical Gleanings	6 —	0
13	Heaven and Hell in Buddhist Perspective	4 —	[illegible]
14	The Buddhist Conception of Spirits (Revised Edition)	3 —	0
15	Women in Buddhist Literature	[illegible] —	0
16	Designation of Human Types (P T S)	10 s	net
17	Dathāvamsa (Text & Translation)	4 —	0
18	Cariyāpitaka (Text and Translation)	1 —	0
19	Saundarananda Kavya (translated into Bengali with an introduction and notes)	1 —	0
20	Licchavi Jati	1 —	4
21	Bauddha Ramani	[illegible] —	8
22	Bauddha Yuger Bhugol	[illegible] —	0
23	The Law of Gift in British India	3 —	0
24	Thupavamsa (P T S Ed)	7 s	6d
25	Mahāvira His Life and Teachings	2 —	0
26	Concept of Buddhism	—	
27	Geographical Essays (in the press)	—	

To be had of —

The Author at 43 Kailas Bose Street Calcutta Messrs Thacker Spink & Co (1933) Ltd 3 Esplanade East Calcutta D B Taraporevala Sons & Co Hornby Road Bombay Motilal Banarsidass Lahore Messrs Kegan Paul Trench Trubner & Co Ltd 38 Great Russell Street London W C 1 Luzac & Co 46 Great Russell Street London W Heffer & Sons Cambridge Otto Harrassowitz Leipzig Germany Paul Geuthner 13 Rue Jacob Paris (VI)